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Congregational Martyrs.

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HISTORICAL PAPERS

(FIRST SERIES).

Congregational Martyrs.

by John Waddington

"I remember a saying in the Preface of their Confession of Faith, at their first publishing of it, which said, 'they hoped God would raise up another John Fox, to compile together the latter martyrs and witnesses of our Lord Jesus in these our days.' And it seems that the work goes forward, in that God stirreth up some to keep records of such things for further use in time to come."—*Old Tract.*

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TO THE

Congregational Union of England and Wales.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN—HONOURED AND BELOVED,

This testimony of the CONGREGATIONAL MARTYRS to the principles we hold in common, is respectfully dedicated to you, as the precious legacy of those who “loved not their lives unto death.”

The circumstances under which it was originally given, the remarkable manner in which it has been preserved, and its adaptation to the times in which we live, will prepare you to overlook the defective manner in which it has been collected, and to receive it with the interest awakened by your esteem for the men, and by your conviction of the growing importance of the sacred cause for which they suffered. You will secure for them, in the nineteenth century, the hearing denied to them three centuries ago.

If the service rendered in this humble attempt to recover the historic fragments from obscurity should meet with

your approval, the unedited manuscripts which elucidate the course of the Exiles in Holland, the Pilgrims in New England, and the Men of the Commonwealth, may be published in a similar form. The moral satisfaction of producing these interesting memorials of the stormy past may suffice for your brother in Christ Jesus, and affectionate Co-worker,

THE COMPILER.

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I.

RICHARD FITZ;

THE

Pioneer Pastor of the Sixteenth Century.

"Freedom hath yet a work for me to do;
So speaks that inward voice which never yet
Spake falsely, when it urged the spirit on
To nobler deeds for country and mankind.
And, for success, I ask no more than this,—
To bear unflinching witness to the truth."

LOWELL.

ON the evening of the 20th of June, 1567, the gates of the old Bridewell prison were opened to receive a company of Christian men and women, who were committed to the custody of the jailor for an indefinite term, at the pleasure of the authorities who consigned them to his care. A word of recantation would have saved them. The Lord Mayor of London, in pity for their condition, urged them to make the required acknowledgment, but conscience rendered them proof against all threatening and firm amidst all persuasion. Their case, as victims of persecution, was by no means peculiar, but the circumstances connected with it, and the result of their experience, whilst in bonds, render it worthy of more attention than has yet been given by the historian.

In that company of prisoners, led to their respective cells, were men, unknown to fame, who discovered the long neglected principles of church government in the New Testament which have since wrought, in silence, such mighty and beneficial

changes; and having satisfied themselves of their divine certainty, they were the first to reduce them to practice. The stages of this incipient movement it is interesting to trace.

The people, in those days, were expected to regulate their consciences by Act of Parliament. They were ordered to adopt the creed of the sovereign. In the course of a few years there had been several changes in the state religion. Henry VII. was of the Romish Church. Henry VIII. was half Protestant and half Papist. Edward VI. was a decided Protestant. Mary was a fierce and bigoted Papist. Elizabeth was in turn opposed to the Church of Rome. Every time therefore the people put on court mourning for these princes, they were commanded to put on a new garb of religion. To the unreflecting and the ignorant this was no hardship. For a piece of bread many would have changed such religion as they had, if commanded, every year, or if possible, every day. To others these sudden changes, to say the least, were very inconvenient. The good men who came out of their hiding places, or returned from exile on the accession of Elizabeth, were not altogether satisfied with the form of a National Church, she was pleased to approve, but they reconciled themselves to the order appointed, in the hope that before the final settlement of the system it would be modified so as to meet their views. They tried hard to find an easy place for their consciences and yet hold livings in the Establishment. Time brought no improvement. They preached against popish ceremonies and the remnants of popish doctrines in the Book of Common Prayer. The people heard them gladly, and compared what they said with the teachings of the New Testament translated by the Martyr Tyndale. As their convictions deepened they expected their spiritual guides to act consistently with their own instructions.

The zeal enkindled in them by the truth was wonderful. Here is a letter (without date), written to one of their ministers, which will give some idea of their fervour: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you for ever, beloved MR. DEERING, in the Lord Jesus.

“Forasmuch as it is reported that some would have you, with others, to qualify your doctrine, from particular naming of those corruptions and maintainers thereof, which, at this day, are urged and used in the Church of England, I, being a simple brother, yet wishing *sincerity* in religion with a *thorough reformation* (not doubting but you, and your great wisdom, learning, and deep understanding in the Scriptures of God, through abundance of His spirit, are able to avoid the subtle sleights of Satan in his instruments, of which, I fear, the above-named is one), I thought it my duty in the Lord to admonish you to take heed how you yield thereunto.

“Since neither the prophets, Christ, His apostles, nor any true preacher, through entreaty, flattery, or tyranny, were made to surcease from [give up] preaching, or to frame their doctrine according to their fancy—therefore my hope is, you will not, but boldly (after the example of all the godly), as you have began, go FORWARD, sincerely, plainly and simply in the truth of God’s gospel. I, with my brethren, do earnestly desire of you, and most earnestly pray to God for you, that you may faithfully, *with the sword of God’s word, cut up all Antichrist’s remnants, and men’s inventions, that the Gospel, being rightly planted, may take an everlasting root among us and our posterity to the glory of God*, the increase of His Kingdom, the discharge of your conscience, and the everlasting salvation of all His elect, which He will bring to pass for His crucified Jesus—His sake, to whom, with the Holy Ghost, be all glory, now and for evermore. So be it.

“Your brother in the Lord JESUS, in whom I wish well to you, as to mine own soul, and in whose name I do daily pray to God for you, as for myself.

“WILLIAM WHITE.”

Pushed onward by these earnest and pious people, the Puritan ministers in the City of London were placed in a most trying dilemma. The bishops threatened them with the heaviest penalties if they did not conform, and their hearers pressed them as earnestly to “go forward.”

The Puritan clergy had a conscientious objection to wearing,

what they called, the popish vestments. The prelates were determined to make them all submit. Archbishop Parker and Bishop Grindal arranged to "call all manner of pastors and curates within the City of London" to appear before them at the Chapel at Lambeth. They reported their intention to the Secretary of State. In the meantime they directed their clerical tailor to make a "sarcenet tippet," and other articles of "priestly apparel," according to the episcopal regulations. They anticipated entire success, and expressed themselves in sanguine terms to Cecil on the subject. "We think," they said, "very many will forsake their livings, and live at printing, teaching children, or otherwise as they can."

On the day appointed, the clergy of London assembled at the palace of the Archbishop. A Mr. Robert Cole, rewarded with two benefices, was placed by the side of the commissioners, wearing the canonical uniform. "My masters," said the bishop's chancellor, "and ye ministers of London, the Council's pleasure is, that strictly ye keep the unity of apparel, like this man who stands here, canonically habited with a square cap, a scholar's gown, priest-like, a tippet, and, in the church, a linen surplice. Ye that will subscribe, write *volo*; those that will not subscribe, write *nolo*: make no words."

In the following letter to Cecil, the archbishop reported the result of the proceedings:—

"Sir,—I must signify to your honour what this day we have done in the examination of the London ministers. Sixty-one promised conformity. Nine or ten were absent. Thirty-seven denied, of which number were the best and some preachers. Six or seven are diligent, sober men, pretending *conscience*. Divers of them zealous, but of little learning. We did suspend them and sequestered the fruits, and from all manner of ministry, with signification that if they would not reconcile themselves within three months, then to be deprived! They showed reasonable quietness and modesty, otherwise than I looked for. *I think some of them must come in when they shall feel their want*; especially such as but in a spiced fancy held out. Some of them were moved in a conference, wherein

I laboured by some advertisements to pacify, but they would not grieve [expressed no regret]. It is not felt as I think *it will be hereafter*. Some of them alleged there were fruits, and would have some toleration, or discharge of payment. I answered, I could not so dispense, and left them to their fate. Thus, your honour hath all worth the writing. I pray your honour to move my lord of London to execute the order. My lord of Ely did write me a letter, wherein he did signify, that if London were reformed, all the realm would soon follow, as I believe the same. This 26th of March, 1566. Your honour's alway in Christ.

“MATTHE: CANT.”

This pantomime at Lambeth made no difference with the humble Christian people to whom we have referred. Still they said, “Let us go forward.”

Some of their ministers were willing to make “a *kind* of separation.” They were disposed, for example, to meet the wishes of their hearers so far as to hold separate services in a private way. For this purpose they hired Plumber's Hall, in the City, under the pretence of accommodating a wedding party—for as yet they were wanting in the firmness that scorns all manœuvre and shrinks from no danger.

Notwithstanding their precautions they were surprised by the Sheriffs of London, and on the 19th of June, 1567, several of the leaders were brought before the High Court of Commission.

A judicial examination before the officials of this inquisitorial tribunal was always marked by the insolence of irresponsible power on the one hand, and by the meekness, blended with courage, of the Christian confessors, on the other.

The detail of the colloquy between the bench and the prisoners might be tedious, but one or two passages may be cited which serve to show the spirit of the men who were called to the van in the cause of religious freedom.

The BISHOP said: “In this severing yourselves from the society of other Christians, you condemn not only us, but also the whole state of the church of God; yea, many good men

have shed their blood for the same which your doings condemn." They replied: "We condemn them not, we would go forward to perfection, for we have had the gospel a long time among us."

"All the learned men in Europe" said the DEAN "are against you."

"Ye will believe no man," added one of the Commissioners. "Yes," answered SMYTH, "we reverence the learned in Geneva, or in other places, wheresoever they be; yet we build not on them our faith and religion."

"Will you be judged by the learned in Geneva?" enquired the BISHOP; "they are against you."

HAWKINS promptly rejoined: "We will be judged by the Word of God, which shall judge us at the last day, therefore sufficient to judge now."

It will be observed, that it was urged as a strong point against these Christian pioneers, that they went beyond the martyrs of the previous reign. Yet in reality they were only reducing to practice the principles in which they had been taught. Proof of this is abundant; but we have no need to enter into it at length. The letter addressed by John Philpot to a Christian congregation in 1555, will be sufficient for the purpose. "If," says this faithful martyr, "the Lord will require, in the day of judgment, a godly usury of all manner of talents which he lendeth unto men and women, how much more will He require the same of His pure religion revealed unto us (which is, of all other talents, the chief, and the most pertaining to exercise in life) if we hide the same in a napkin and set it not forth to the usury of God's glory and edifying of His church by true confession.

"God hath enkindled the bright light of His gospel which in time past was suppressed and hid under the vile ashes of man's traditions, and hath caused the brightness thereof to shine in our hearts, to the end that the same might shine before men to the honour of His name. It is not only given us to believe, but also to confess and declare what we believe in our outward conversation.

“It is better to be afflicted and to be slain in the Church of God than to be counted the son of a king in the synagogue of false religion. *We were born into this world to be witnesses unto the truth both learned and unlearned.* Now since the time is come that we must show our faith and declare whether we will be God’s servants in righteousness and holiness—as we have been taught and are bound to follow—or else, with hypocrisy, to serve unrighteousness, let us take good heed that we be found faithful in the Lord’s covenant, and true members of His church, in which, through knowledge, we are engrafted.

“*Wheresoever we perceive any people to worship God truly after His word, there we may be certain the church of Christ to be, unto which we ought to associate ourselves, and to desire, with the prophet David, to praise God in the midst of His church.* But if we behold, through the iniquity of the time, separations to be made with counterfeit religion, *otherwise than the Word of God do we teach,* we ought then, if we be required to be companions thereof, to say with David: ‘I have hated the synagogue of the malignant, and will not sit with the wicked.’

“Many affirm their conscience will bear them well enough to all that they do, and go to the idolatrous church to service, whose *conscience is very large to satisfy man more than God;* and although their conscience can bear them so to do, yet I am sure that a *good conscience* will not permit them so to do, which *cannot be good unless it be directed after the knowledge of God’s word;* and therefore, in Latin, this feeling mind is called *conscientia*, which soundeth by interpretation, as much as *with knowledge.*”

The Christian confessors in Bridewell had the testimony of conscience enlightened by the Word of God. The separation they sought was neither prompted by ignorance nor by malignity. They felt therefore that they were entitled to the countenance of the English reformers who had survived the Marian persecution. It is a great support to those who have to make a stand for sacred principles, to have the sympathy of brethren whose soundness of judgment and consistency of character add weight to their counsel and enhance the value

of their friendship. Few have courage to venture alone in the narrow way, however clearly, to their own minds, the course of Christian duty may appear.

After some months spent in their dreary confinement, the brethren in bonds wrote to Mr. Lever, the friend of John Bradford, and other martyrs, for advice and encouragement. He had suffered exile with its manifold sorrows and trials. On his return from the Continent, he was indisposed to join the new Elizabethan establishment, and preached to a voluntary congregation for a time in Coventry. It was natural that men who were enduring affliction for the truth's sake should expect, from a man of his order, words of fraternal sympathy. But at this time Mr. Lever was within reach of a little church preferment, and to their surprize and deep pain, he wrote to them a letter, December 5, 1568, of very different tendency. He did not countenance their movement. He condemned equally with themselves the errors still remaining in the Anglican Church, and he disapproved of the Romish vestments and ceremonials, but he thought their separation needless and even mischievous. "I would," he said, "in no wise for these things give or take any occasion of contention or division. God guide us by His grace to seek, find, and follow His will and wisdom revealed by His word."

This was a great disappointment and must have caused them for the time much depression.

Grouped together in the depth of winter, and shivering with cold, we can imagine the solemn council that would be held by the poor and afflicted people on reading the letter.

"Is it for this we have suffered so many things?" one of their number might say. "Our families are starving, houseless in this season of bitter cold, pinched with hunger, or wasted with sickness. We have lain here for months and there is no prospect of release. What shall we gain by all these sufferings and privations for the cause of truth? Even Master Lever condemns our course. The sacrifice we make in the judgment of godly men is neither rightly estimated nor fully approved. The world will only ridicule and good men seem to blame

us whilst they pity our weakness. What shall we do therefore? ”

“Brethren, beloved in the Lord Jesus,” another might reply, “bear with this passionate utterance, for the flesh is weak. Nature must have vent. But in this hour of sorrow and of temptation we must have faith in God. We sow in tears, but the seed is precious and it will not be lost. Shall we put Master Lever in the place of Christ? Did we come here to gain the favour of men? Will nothing satisfy us but the judgment of the reformed churches? This one sentence in the letter of Mr. Lever is enough to meet our case : ‘God guide us by His grace to *seek, find, and follow* His will and wisdom *revealed by His word.*’ We have sought and found the will of God. More light has broken from His word since we came into this prison than in all our lives before. It remains only that we FOLLOW the truth made known to us. What shall happen to ourselves, to our wives, and to our children, we must leave with Him whose we are and whom we serve. If we can do nothing better for the truth than die for it, why should we hesitate? Are we better than our fathers? Let us from this hour leave all man’s traditions. There is only one foundation for the Church—the Rock of Ages. What have we to do with Synods or with Councils? Why should we look to Convocations or to Parliaments? Christ is our Lawgiver and our King. Once more, then, in the name of the Leader of Israel, and in His strength, let us go forward.”

William White, in a letter addressed to Bishop Grindal (December 19, 1568), after a stern rebuke for his inconsistency, says, “Better were it for you to leave your lordly dignity, not given you by Christ, and to suffer affliction for the truth of the gospel, than by enjoying thereof to become a persecutor of your brother. . . . *I desire you, in the bowels of Christ, not to restrain us of the liberty of our consciences, but to be a means to enlarge our liberty in the truth and sincerity of the gospel;* and use your interest, that all the remnants of Antichrist may be abolished, with every plant that our heavenly Father has not planted.—Signed, yours in the Lord to command, WILLIAM WHITE, who

joineth with you in every speck of truth, but utterly detesteth whole Antichrist, head, body, and tail, never to join with you, or any, in the least point thereof, nor in any ordinances of man, contrary to the Word of God, by His grace unto the Church."

At the expiration of a year's imprisonment, an order was sent from the Lords of the Council to liberate twenty-four men and seven women of the number sent to Bridewell. Their names were:—John Smith, John Roper, Robert Hawkins, *James Ireland*, William Nixon, Walter Hynkesman, THOMAS ROWLAND, George Waddy, William Turner, John Nayshe, James Adderton, William Wight, Thomas Lydford, Richard Langton, Alexander Lacy, *John Leonard*, Robert Tod, Roger Hawksworth, *Robert Sparrow*, *Richard King*, Christopher Colman, John Benson, John Bolton, Robert Gates.

They left the prison unchanged in their opposition to every vestige of Antichrist. In subsequent examinations we find William White, with equal intrepidity, and, if possible, with greater decision, giving utterance to his sentiments. But these heroic men did not confine themselves to reiterated and earnest protestation. The time came when they felt it to be their duty, at the call of God given to them in His word, to come out distinctly from the State Church, and to organize themselves as a Christian church in simple and undivided allegiance to the Lord Jesus. They counted the cost. To pass the line of separation was to cross the brook Kedron and to enter into scenes of sorrow and of conflict. It was a sublime moment in the history of religious freedom when they took this decided and irrevocable step. Not that they talked much of religious freedom or of abstract principles of any kind. Freedom is born of truth, and it follows in the exercise of religious conviction as one of its attendant blessings.

We shall be disappointed if we expect these founders of the "first separated church" to embody, as in modern times, grand sentiments in magniloquent resolutions.

They said nothing of the inviolability of conscience or of the right of judgment, except in their actions. They offered themselves to die, to obey God rather than kings or prelates, and

from this determination sprung the whole question of civil or spiritual liberty.

“Indeed,” it has been justly observed, “they were no worshippers of mere principles; they worshipped God. Principles were with them angels keeping ward around the throne, not sitting thereon. Principles, existent apart from Him, were to them a phantom—a nothing. As well might the sun shine the sunbeams without the sun. God was the centre from which all principle derived origin, vigour, and life.”*

A Congregational Church was formed, of which, RICHARD FITZ was *Pastor*, with THOMAS ROWLAND, *Deacon*. We know nothing of the solemnities of the occasion, nor yet of the exact time and place of its organization†, except, as we shall find from a document we are about to quote, that it was previous to 1571, and consequently antecedent to the Presbyterian Church at Wandsworth, which was secretly constituted on the 20th of November in the following year.

Obscure as was the Christian Society it did not escape the tongue of scandal. To the reproach which fell upon it we are indebted as an occasion for the following declaration from the pen of the devoted pastor:—

“The True Markes of Christes Church, &c.

“The order of the Privye Church in London, whiche by the malice of Satan is falselie slaundred and evell spoken of.

“The myndes of them, that by the strengthe and workinge of the Almighty, our Lorde Jesus Christe, have set their hands and hartes to the pure unmingled and sincere worshippinge of

* Dr. Post.

† Bishop Grindal writing to Bullinger, June 11, 1568, says:—“Some London citizens of the lowest order, with four or five ministers, remarkable neither for judgment, nor learning, have openly separated from us; and sometimes in private houses, sometimes in fields, and occasionally even in ships, they have held meetings and administered the sacraments. Besides this, they have ordained ministers, elders, and deacons, after their own way. The number of the sect is about two hundred, but consisting of more women than men. The Privy Council have lately committed the heads of this faction to prison, and are now using means to put a timely stop to this sect.”

God, according to His blessed and glorious worde in al things, onely abolishing and abhorringe all tradicions and inventions of man whatsover, in the same religion and service of our Lord God, knowing this always that the trew and afflicted Church of our Lorde and Savyoure Jesus Christ, eyther hathe, or else ever more continually under the crosse stryvethe for to have :

“FIRSTE AND FORMOSTE, the glorious worde and Evangele preached, not in bondage and subjection, but freely and purelye.

“SECONDLY, to have the sacraments mynistered purelye onely, and all together accordinge to the institution and good worde of the Lord Jesus, without any tradicion or invention of man; and laste of all to have, not the fylthye cannon lawe, but disseplyne onely, and all together agreeable to the same heavenly and all mighty worde of our good Lorde Jesus Christe.

“RICHARD FYTZ, Minister.”

As the first document, known to be in existence, in connection with the history of English Congregationalism, we have given it *literatim*. It is not needful to adhere to the spelling of the olden time in quoting the following paper from the original, as it lies before us, incidentally brought to light, after being lost to observation for nearly three hundred years.

“O England, if thou return—return unto me saith the Lord, Jer. iv. 1. We your poor afflicted, and your humble and obedient subjects in the Lord, most earnestly desire that the Word of our God may be set to reign, and have the first place, to rule and reform all estates and degrees of men, to build and plant His holy signs and true marks, to cut down, to root out, and utterly destroy by the axe of the same—His holy word—all monuments of idolatry, to wit, that wicked canon law which is the only root out of which these abominable branches do grow. The Almighty our God will not alway suffer such dishonour to His blessed evangel, which, for the sins and trials of His people, He suffereth the Papists and divers false brethren and domestical enemies to suppress, to arrest and abuse, to serve their purposes, as they persuade themselves! Yet, for all their policy and cun-

ning, these abominations above-named, with many other, are no more able to stand before the word of our God, having the power of discipline, than Dagon was able to stand before the Lord His holy ark, the power whereof threw Dagon twice to the dust, as in 1 Sam. v. 3, 4.

“Therefore according to the saying of the Almighty our God, Matt. xviii. 20 :—‘Wherever two or three are gathered in my name there am I’—*so we a poor congregation whom God hath separated from the church of England, and from the mingled and false worshipping therein used, out of the which assemblies the Lord our only Saviour hath called us, and still calleth, saying, come out from among them, and separate yourselves from them, and touch no unclean thing, then will I receive you, and I will be your God, and you shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord.* 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. *So as God giveth strength at this day, we do serve the Lord every Sabbath day in houses, and on the fourth day in the week we meet or come together weekly to use prayer and exercise discipline on them which do deserve it, by the strength and sure warrant of the Lord God’s word, as in Matt. xviii. 16, 17 ; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5.*

“Woe to this Canon Law, the gain whereof hath caused the bishops and clergy of England to forsake the right way, and hath gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, and which, through their pomp and covetousness, hath brought the gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ into such slander and contempt, that men do think that the Papists for the most part do use and hold a better religion than those which call themselves Christians and are not. The Holy Ghost saith, ‘I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, which had *two horns like a lamb,*’ Rev. xiii. 11, 12.—So this *secret and disguised Antichrist*, to wit, the Canon Law, with the branches and maintainers, though not so openly, have, by long imprisonment, pined and killed the Lord’s servants (*as our minister Richard Fitz, Thomas Rowland, deacon, one Partridge, and Giles Fowler, and besides them a great multitude*), whose good cause and faithful testimony, though we should cease to groan and cry unto our God to redress such wrong and cruel handling of His poor remnant, the

very walls of the prisons about this city—as the Gatehouse, Bridewell, the Counters, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea, and the White Lion—would testify God's anger kindled against this land for such injustice and subtle persecution.

“O Lord God Almighty grant for thy mercies sake, that as Jehosaphat in the 10th year of his reign, 2 Chron. xvii, 7, 10, destroyed the high places and groves out of Judah, and sent his princes and priests, and gave them the book of the Law with them to reform religion by, and so fear came upon every city that they made not war against Jehosaphat; so Lord we most humbly beseech Thee to strengthen the Queen's highness with His Holy Spirit, that in the 13th year of her reign (1571), she may cast down all the places of Idolatry within her land, with the popish canon law, and all the superstition and commandments of men, and pluck up by the root all filthy ceremonies pertaining to the same, and that Her Highness may send forth princes and ministers, and give them the Book of the Lord, that they may bring home the people of God to the purity and truth of the apostolic church. Then shall the fear of the Lord come upon every city and country, that they shall not make war against Her Highness. No! the very enemies that are without shall be compelled to bring presents to her grace. Thus, O Lord, grant that Her Highness may not only have a blessed, large, and prosperous reign, with peace of conscience in this life, but also in the life to come, Her Highness may enjoy, by the mercies and death of our Lord Jesus, our only Saviour, life everlasting, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Signed by twenty-seven names, amongst which we find:—

HARRY SPARROWE.

JOHN KYNG.

JOHN LEONARD.

ELIZABETH LEONARD.

JAMES IRELAND.

MARTIN COLMAN.*

* Cf. page 10.

This primary Congregational Church of the English Reformation was essentially and sternly Protestant. It left no way of retreat toward Rome. The Bible only as its code. Christ as its only King. Free course for the gospel. Pastors and Deacons only for its officers. Independence of all external control. The equality of the Christian brotherhood. The maintenance of Scriptural Church discipline. These were its principles, simple, pure, and applicable in all lands, and in all times. Religious liberty has never flourished where they are unknown.

BRIEF and fragmentary as are the original manuscripts relating to RICHARD FITZ, we confess the recent discovery of them awakened in us peculiar emotions. These touching and simple memorials are all that remain to us, and yet it is as satisfactory as it is remarkable that they should have been preserved by the Metropolitan Bishop, and finally transferred to the royal archives. The name of FITZ was known to the Christian exiles in Holland associated with the Pilgrim Fathers. HENRY AINSWORTH speaks of "that separated church, whereof Mr. FITZ was pastor, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign."* ROBINSON also refers to this church.† In a dialogue, printed in 1593, we find a similar allusion.

"DESIDERIUS" says: "Were there none that did write for this cause before Browne?"

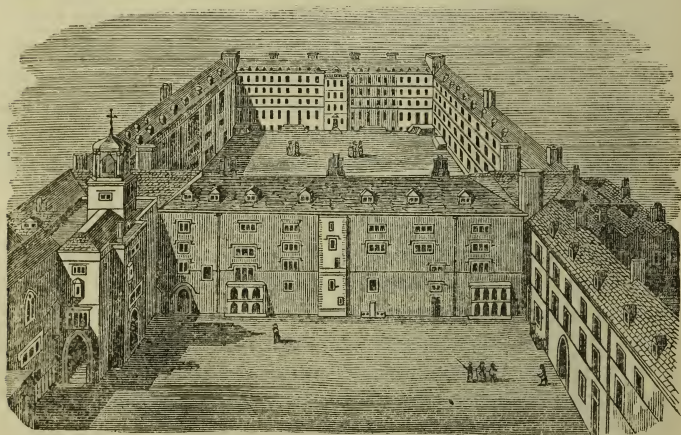
MILES MICKLEBOUND replies: "Yes, verily, the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists have, in their authentic writings, laid down the ground thereof, and upon that ground is all their building reared up and surely settled. Moreover, many of the Martyrs, both former and later, have maintained it, as is to be seen in 'ACTS AND MONUMENTS' of the Church. Also, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, *there was a separated Church,*

* Counterpoison, 1608, pp. 39, 160.

† Works, vol. ii. p. 57.

whereof Mr. FITZ was PASTOR, that professed and practised that cause before Mr. Browne wrote for it."

It was reserved for us, in 1861, to identify him in his relation to the "Flock of Slaughter," suffering bonds and imprisonment in the Bridewell. These original papers enable us with certainty to trace the origin of the first voluntary church in England, after the Marian persecution, as contemporaneous with the Anglican Establishment. How different the auspices under which they were called into existence. The words of the eloquent historian of the Reformation are capable of another application besides that which he has given to them:—"When man would raise upon earth something to shade him or to shelter him, see what preparations, what materials, scaffolding, and workmen; what hewing and digging, and heaps of rubbish: but God, when it so pleases Him, can take the smallest grain of seed that a new-born babe could grasp in its tiny hand; He puts it into the bosom of the earth, and from this grain, which lies at first unnoticed, He produces that immense tree, beneath whose shade the families of mankind may find shelter. The doing of great things by imperceptibly small means—such is the rule with God."



OLD BRIDEWELL, CITY OF LONDON. PAGE 1.

II.

EDWARD DEERING,

AND

The Rock of Principle.

"Get but the truth once uttered, and 'tis like
A star new born, that drops into its place,
And which, once circling in its placid round,
Not all the tumult of the earth can shake."

LOWELL.

THE "first separated church," as we have seen, was soon bereft of pastoral care, except indeed that of the "Good Shepherd." Where could these afflicted brethren look for a successor to their minister starved in prison? In the service of the Establishment the clergy might find ample provision, learned leisure, high distinction, and (what is more gratifying to human nature) the exercise of power. Her mitred dignitaries had access to the court, and were scarcely second in their influence to the highest civil officials of the realm.

The brethren just liberated from Bridewell, on the contrary, could offer to one who should take the oversight of them nothing beyond a share of the "afflictions of the gospel." The congregational pastor must, at that time, be prepared for severe privation, bitter reproach, and constant jeopardy; content, if only for a day, he might stand in the line of the faithful men who "loved not their lives unto the death."

We need not wonder that a blank exists in the record after the name of RICHARD FITZ. The thoughts of the more earnest

of the church, we may suppose, were directed to EDWARD DEERING, B.D.*, of Christ's College, and descended from the ancient family at Surrenden Deering, Kent. He was a Puritan and not a Separatist: so advanced, however, in his views that a single step further, in practical and in logical consistency, would have brought him out of the "house of bondage." We shall linger a while to examine the views of this noble and earnest Christian man, though for the time it may suspend the story it is our more special object to relate. We do this with the greater willingness because of the opportunity we have in his family letters to exhibit the heart life of these champions for the truth. Their zealous Protestantism sprang from their deep and rich Christian experience. We do not always see the source of their uncompromising fidelity, and fail in consequence to appreciate the excellence of their character. Perhaps it is the one-sided view we have of the leaders of the struggle that rather repels than invites the religious reader. We do not find the "green pastures" and the "still waters" amid the thorns of "ecclesiastical controversy."

The biography of EDWARD DEERING ought to be written, and probably will be, if the taste for such reading be revived. For the present we shall mark the course he pursued, in some of the more remarkable junctures of his personal history, that show the man and his singular fidelity. When at Cambridge, where he was proctor, and Lady Margaret's preacher, he brought before the attention of Sir William Cecil, the Chancellor, the crying abuses existing at the time in the University. Of the doctors and heads of houses he says: "It grieveth me, in my very soul, to remember their faults; and you, if you will be happy, seek speedily to remedy them. They keep benefices and be non-residents. While they are clothed in scarlet, their flocks perish for cold; and while they fare deliciously, their people are faint with a most miserable hunger." Sir William was offended with his plainness, and manifested some estrangement.

On the 25th of February, 1569, the intrepid Puritan, by

* *Supra*, page 2.

command, preached before Queen Elizabeth. An occasion of this nature has often proved too much for the latent vanity of the preacher. Mr. Deering, however, was self-possessed before the imperious sovereign and her distinguished court. He announced his text from Psalm lxxviii. 70, and proceeded calmly, and with great clearness, to show the striking changes in the temporal condition and experience of the son of Jesse, and the responsibility of his position when advanced from the sheepfold to the throne. He then, in the most impressive manner, showed the remarkable transition of the English princess, from a state of dependence, affliction, and peril, to one of security and power. All felt the solemn personality of every sentence, and wondered at the temerity of the orator. Then, turning toward her Majesty, with the boldness of Elijah, he said:—

“You that are now a princess of majesty, if you have known great changes, fly far away from all unthankfulness. If you have seen the days in which you have said, ‘O Lord, I have no friend but Thee alone,’ now that prosperity hath brought unto you a great many fair countenances, forget not that God who was your only friend in trouble. If in times past you have prayed that you might not build upon the sand, to have your house shaken with every blast of wind, now that you have choice of your own ground, *take heed, I beseech you, where you lay your foundation.* Now that the stern and helm is in your own hand, guide your ship so that the waves do not overrun it. If you have prayed in times past unto God to mollify your enemies’ hearts, and to bring their cruel practices to nothing, now that you yourself are set in safety, be not cruel unto God’s anointed, and do His prophets no harm. I need not seek far for offences whereat God’s people are grieved; even round about this chapel I see a great many, and God in His good time shall root them out. If you have said some time of yourself, *tanquam ovis*, as a sheep appointed to be slain (Psalm xliv. 22), take heed that you hear not now of the prophet, *tanquam indomita juvenca*, as an untamed and unruly heifer” (Jer. xxxi. 18).

The application of this last scripture metaphor incensed her Majesty beyond degree. She resented it as much as if the preacher, and not the prophet, had first used the term. It was never forgotten that Master Deering had called the Queen, to her face, "an untamed and unruly heifer."

The preacher might have known, when the words were spoken, what offence was given*, but he continued unabashed :—

"I will not, with many words, admonish your Majesty, that are wise enough, only I will say this, return unto your heart and search your reins. And here I set before you the tribunal of Christ. If you know these things to be true, discharge the faith you owe: grieve not your quiet conscience, lest it begin to accuse you, and the burden of it be greater than you shall be able to bear."

He described the ignorance and miseries of the people, and the scandalous vices of the clergy, and charged the Queen, as in the sight of God, to remove them. "I dare not," said the intrepid preacher, "but speak the truth, seeing God of His goodness hath called me hither. He hath raised me up so high when I was cast down, that I cannot forget His benefits. *If this will not serve, I will surely speak it more plainly when the Lord shall open my mouth again.*"

In the course of events, Mr. Deering became chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, and held that appointment when his grace became involved in treasonable designs connected with Mary Queen of Scots. The distressing condition of his noble patron, as prisoner in the Tower of London, induced Mr. Deering again to write to Cecil, now Lord Burleigh, in 1569–70. He says: "I seek unto your Honour that the Duke may have this liberty, if he will, to come unto the sermon which I preach in the Tower. Why I request it there is no carnal cause, and for mine own integrity this I profess unto you, before

* When Dr. Nowell, dean of St. Paul's, in a sermon before the Queen, spoke less reverently than her Majesty liked of the sign of the cross, she called aloud to him from a closet window, commanding him to retire from that ungodly digression, and return to his text.

the Lord, that so long as God's mercy doth so strengthen me, that my conscience doth not accuse me before Him, there is not mortal man nor woman whose displeasure I am afraid of. The same God that I trust will teach you to use His mercy in all abundance and honour, and avoid the great dangers that to-day and to-morrow hang before you. Once again (as I said before, if I speak not foolishly), that as you can, you will endeavour to satisfy this request. Your long experience and great wisdom cannot choose but see, that if all strange fancies were out of my lord of Norfolk's head, his unfeigned godliness were a great preparation to the best way; but I leave such considerations unto yourself. The God of all peace move your heart to work His will, that *when this little vanity is overpast, you may be partakers of the glory that abideth for ever.* Amen."

The duty of a Christian minister in such an extremity was peculiarly difficult. But Mr. Deering met the occasion with the fidelity of an ambassador of Christ, the wisdom of a counsellor, and the affection of a friend. Where shall we find a document, considering the age, more remarkable than the following letters:—

"Gratia et pax a Deo patre et Domino nostro Jesu Christo.—The long good will that I have borne unto you, as to one that earnestly professed the gospel, and the great duty I owe you as to my lord and master, make, that now I should write unto you, not knowing whether opportunity shall be such as hereafter I may do you any service. God, the author of all life, hath shut both you and me up in his hands, that there is great likelihood our lives in this world are now but short. The prince that executeth the judgment of the Lord, he hath found you out in your great sins—and sickness that reigneth over all flesh, it hath taken now long hold on me. So that, as I said, we are both in the hand of the Lord. We are summoned peremptorily; death hath given an assault, and the weak holds of our life they are violently shaken. Now, therefore, my lord, let us take counsel together, and as a wise master, learn of a faithful servant what is best to be

done; the worst that our sins can do unto us, is to lay upon us the just reward of death; my disease which thus afflicteth me for many thousand sins, it can but take away my life, which I have so abused. And all your deep dissimulation and hypocrisy—your great ambitions, your faithless religion, which have so bewitched you,—what can they do more than this? The remedy now is to make of necessity a virtue, that is, to bear it wisely, which you must needs abide. I have, I thank God, found that grace, that I can love this saying, *Cupio dissolvi, et esse cum Christo*; the Lord also open your heart and guide your understanding, that with all saints you may do likewise, and pray *Veni Domine Jesu*.

“And now, forasmuch as this is the last duty that I am like to do unto you, as God shall give grace, I will so advise you, as I may testify mine own faith, and make you strong against the day of trial, trusting that our God shall so remember us both in mercy, that after a little while we shall see better days, and reign with him that abideth king for ever. There is now but one thing necessary for you to learn in this life, that is, how you may willingly desire to die; a hard lesson for a natural man, for death is our last enemy and his assault most violent for the trial of our faith; but Christ, who hath overcome death and hell, he hath broken the strength of his battle, and set up the songs of triumph unto all that believe, that we may have the fulness of joy, and say with gladness, ‘O death, where is thy sting?’

“Now, that this joy may be yours, and this gladness your inheritance, prepare yourself, not in your own wisdom, for that hath already deceived you, but in the wisdom of God, that your hope may be sure. If you will now have the heart that shall condemn the force of death, consider wherefore you are called to die. It is laid to your charge that you have dealt traiterously with your prince, with your country, and with the religion of God: and upon these crimes you are condemned to die. If you be guiltless, O my lord, blessed are you, and blessed is your portion: He hath spoken it that never will change. If when you do well you suffer wrongfully,

take it patiently, for this is acceptable to God; but if you be guilty, you have not your hope in death (for that you have deserved), but your hope is this, that you die so as it becometh you, which, if God shall grant unto you, then blessed is the hour that God shall bring upon you; you shall make that change, which God, for His Christ's sake, will lay speedily upon all His children, and you shall die once that you may live ever. Now that you may know how you ought to die, learn this of the Lord, which he hath so plainly taught you. The first part of your true repentance must be an humble confession, whatsoever your own conscience can utter more than is revealed. O my lord, speak openly the truth; Satan is an enemy unto us, and his slights are many; if you will tread the malicious serpent under your feet, and triumph with Christ, who hath spoiled hell, tell the truth, my Lord, conceal nothing, so shall you shun the devil." (Here he cites the scriptural examples of confession—Achan, David, the Prodigal, the Thief on the Cross, and Paul.)

"What should I say more. I trust you fear God, and I have seen in you many signs of grace. I doubt not but you will make it known whatsoever is in your heart. It is the Word of God that I have spoken, and it is the only truth upon which you may build your faith. This thing toucheth so near the glory of God and the safety of His gospel, that you must now needs forsake your friends and kinsmen, yea, forget the love of yourself, and, if you have been partaker of any counsel, disclose the conspiracies of the wicked.

"And now, my lord, I beseech you, pray for me, and humbly, upon my knees, I ask you hearty forgiveness wherein I have not done as it became me touching you.

"You know how in my time I have persuaded you from your wicked servants, from your popish friends, and from your adulterous woman. But (alas), my lord, your high calling hath bridled my words—I could not speak as I should; my words were too soft to heal so old a disease. Why should I have tarried in your lordship's house, except these things had been amended? This bearing with your evil was the greatest

evil I could have done you. And I beseech you forgive me, and God, for His mercies' sake, shall strengthen, that hereafter I shall not fear to reprove the sinner; and God shall forgive you your dulness of spirit, that could not be moved with a little counsel. Now, my Lord, be strong in the Lord, and fear not; if you must die, remember that Christ hath overcome him that hath the power of death, and hath set us free from the power of the grave. Though you do for a very little time turn again unto dust, yet again you shall hear the voice of the trumpet; corruption shall die, because he was no better than his fathers, and you when you go, you shall go to your fathers, the long race of nobility of which God hath raised you; every one in his time is gone before you, and so many as have died in the faith, they shall be of your fellowship and kindred, and you shall praise God with them, and not fear the second death. The Lord open your eyes that you may see your hope, and you shall love that company above kings and princes. You shall see Abraham, of whom you have heard so much, Isaac, Jacob, Job, Samuel, Daniel, whose names you loved; you shall see Paul and Peter, whose society you wish for, and the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles that are gone before you. Be bold, therefore, and be bold to die; with Elias you shall see Christ, clothed with your flesh, who hath immortality in His hand, and shall make you reign for ever; your time shall not be tedious, and your glory shall have no change; and He that made the heavens so high above the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, so full of excellent beauty, He shall be your portion in His endless glory. Would God you could see Him now with open countenance, that you might know His loving kindness, how much it is better than life. I would you could with all His saints perceive what were the height, the breadth, length, and the depth of His unsearchable riches. O happy days that shall never end; O blessed inheritance that shall never waste; O holy city, New Jerusalem, the perfection of beauty, where the inhabitants are princes; O precious building that is not made with hands, and joyful tabernacles, which God Himself hath pitched! My voice faileth, and my tongue cleaveth to my

mouth, when I would declare the everlasting gladness, when God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, nor yet any pain, for the first things are past. Who remembreth this, and saith not, all flesh is grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of the field? We have nothing here but fear of our enemy, grief in poverty, pain in labour, care in riches, unsteadfastness in friendship, envy in authority, emulation in honour, change in nobility, fear in a kingdom, and, as the greatest of all princes hath wisely pronounced, vexation of spirit in all things that is under the sun. So true it is vanity of vanities, and all is but vanity. You need no example, O my lord and master—behold yourself, and see what you were; rejoice in the Lord, and love better things; cease to eat of corruption, and desire manna; drink not of these puddles, but go to the pure water of life, which is clear as crystal, and proceedeth out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb; you are but one step from this glorious blessing, and that is to die willingly and well; speak forth the secrets of your heart, and give God glory. The Lord bless you, and keep you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and send you peace.”

In 1572, Mr. Deering was appointed lecturer at St. Paul's. Crowds attended his ministry, and the bishops were alarmed. Spies were employed to catch any word that might involve him in a charge of sedition. But with all his earnestness he combined great discretion, and no tangible proof could be brought against him. It was suggested, however, that he might give utterance to some dangerous sentiment, and, as a measure of prevention, he was silenced. He was summoned before the Star Chamber, but appealed to Lord Burleigh, in a letter, dated September, 1573, to obtain a fair hearing. On the 1st of November, in the same year, he followed this communication with a full and frank exposition of his views:—

“*I persuade myself that I am on sure ground.* Because I will not appear to be led by fancy, wherein of a great many I am thought to be singular, I will be bold with you, as the man, above others of your calling, I am bound to honour, to

show forth what is my opinion, and the reasons by which I am moved unto it. Wherein, my good Lord, I most heartily beseech you, break not, with any violence, the goodness of your nature, to make it favour falsehood; but love the truth, wherein you have well inclined, and which shall make you blessed in time to come. I am thus persuaded.

“*The lordship or civil government of bishops is utterly unlawful.* My reason is this: *the kingdom of Christ is only a spiritual government; but the government of the Church is a part of the kingdom of Christ; and therefore the government of the Church is only a spiritual government.* What the kingdom is, and what government He hath established in it, learn not of me, but of God himself (Isaiah xi. 4; John xviii. 36; 2 Cor. x. 4).

“There are no chariots that go swift in victory as the word of truth; no terror in the world that so shaketh the bowels, and maketh the thoughts to tremble, as the sword of the Spirit. There is no sceptre that reacheth so wide a dominion as the law of the majesty of God, which is written in the hearts of all the world, and condemneth all flesh before the majesty of God. All other force is but little, and we may either withstand it or fly from it. But the power of the Word is such as shall pass all stops and hinderances.

“My lord, seeing all men are subject before the minister, even as himself also is subject to the words of his mouth, what power, what authority, will you give unto him? Will you set him upon a seat of justice, and put a sword in his hand? Then bring the prince to plead her cause, guilty or or not guilty? Fie upon the pope, that hath so dishonoured God, and made the glory of his judgment-seat to be spotted in the countenance of a faint-hearted king. We will be no proctors for such an untimely fruit, that hath made princes bondmen, nobility thralldom, and himself a tyrant. Let us learn a better lesson of our Saviour Christ—*Date Cæsari quæ sunt Cæsaris, et quæ sunt Dei, Deo.* The prince alone is the person in the world to whom God hath committed the seat of justice, and they only to execute the duty of it to whom it is committed. The minister is appointed for another defence, where horsemen and chariots will do no

good. They may hinder the minister, and make him forget his duty; they cannot profit him in his office and function. *He must frame the heart, upon which you cannot set a crown; and edify the soul, which flesh and blood cannot hurt.* He sealeth unto the conscience God's mercies, which are sweeter than life, and maketh rich the thoughts with righteousness and peace, which shall abide for ever. To those that are disobedient he pronounceth the judgment that maketh the heart afraid; and to the poor in spirit he bringeth comfort which no tongue can express. And to these things, what availeth either sword or spear? God asketh but a tongue that is prepared to speak; and He ministereth the power that is invisible.

“If this function were supplied with dutiful officers, the sword of the Spirit, which God hath given them, would vanquish Satan, and destroy the power of darkness, till the knowledge of God were plentiful upon earth, and all the joys of heart were sealed unto men in perfect beauty; till the eyes did see great happiness in the face of the heavens, and the ear did hear the sweet harmony of the forgiveness of sins; till the meat tasted of that secret manna, of which he should eat for ever, and his drink were pure, of the water of life which proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; till his garments did smell of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and in life did shine the life of immortality. But I will not go about to express it in words which the ear cannot hear, nor the tongue speak. I beseech the Lord make you feel the pleasure of it within, till all the world be but dung in respect of Christ. For in Him all honour is a glorious blessing; and without Him, but a covering of an after woe.”

After contrasting the names given in the New Testament with the titles assumed by the hierarchy, he continues:—

“These scriptures that have been alleged are no vain authorities, that are easily rejected, nor any dark speeches that are hardly understood. The words are written by the apostles and prophets; and they have the strength of the Spirit of God. They shall sound far and near, and accomplish the work for which they were spoken, though all the world were

in arms against them. In vain we cry, 'The State! The State!' and the 'Commonwealth!' when indeed there is no state nor no commonwealth. For the lordship of a bishop hath ever been a plague-sore in the state of a kingdom, and is at this day a swelling wound, full of corruption, in the body of a commonwealth. And yet, if the state *did require it*, the voice of the Lord must be obeyed, though all the kingdoms in the earth did fall before it. God is not a man, that we may control his honour. He hath made both heaven and earth; and when He shall appear, all the creatures of the world shall be moved at His presence, and the children of men shall throw down their crowns. Let us harden our hearts as the adamant stone not to hear His counsel, yet when the force of His word shall knit together again our bones and ashes, that they may arise into eternal life, we shall say then, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'

"And now to shut up this long discourse (which yet, I pray God, it doth not make you weary), let us remember the honour of our Archbishop, which is Jesus Christ. He was born of a poor woman, in a strange place, and received into an inn, and put forth into a stable, wrapt in coarse clothes, and laid in a manger; persecuted from his swaddling clothes into strange countries, returning home in fear, and often hiding himself; brought up in the sweat of his brow, and the occupation of his father; mocked with his base parentage, and reproached with the name of beggarly Nazareth; not one of the nobility known to favour him, but a poor company which were basely despised. In all his greatest glory he was laughed to scorn; and the title of his kingdom was set upon a cross of shame. And in this estate doth he not say unto his disciples, 'I have appointed you a kingdom, *as my Father hath appointed unto me?*' (Luke xxii. 29). And how can you frame out of *this pattern*, either pope's monarchy or the bishop's kingdoms; either a triple crown so far above princes, or a sumptuous mitre so unmeet for apostles? Surely, my Lord, this gear, it will not stand. It is a plant which our Father in heaven never planted, and it will be rooted out."

With these views of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, it would be unaccountable to us that Mr. Deering should continue within the Establishment, if we did not witness the strange inconsistency in our own day.

Turning from the letter to the eloquent writer, and overlooking, for the occasion, the distance of time, we are constrained to say: "Brother and friend! How is it that you deny the sword to the prelate, and yet in the church of God concede that sword to the civil magistrate? You speak of the 'things that are Cæsar's' and of 'things that are God's.' But you fail practically to make the distinction between them. Is Cæsar to appoint pastors for the Christian Church? Can Cæsar enforce the laws of Jesus Christ in that which relates to his spiritual reign?" Position makes a great difference. It is very difficult within the shadow of a cathedral, to see distinctly the simple outline of church polity given in the New Testament. Mr. Deering in reference to the prelates says: "I must freely confess, if I were in one of their places, I should not have been so soon persuaded." As an apology for the martyrs of the Reformation, he adds: "The Lord had not revealed the truth unto them, but left them in that infirmity, as He left many of His saints before them in as great—and so leaveth yet a great many churches. Notwithstanding, we reverence their memory, and love their ashes, which are buried in honour against the day of Christ. Men are all men, and not fit to sit in judgment of the truth of God. *If there were but one that built upon His word, he alone were on the Rock, which should never be removed.*"

We may apply these just remarks in his own case. The grand defect of the Reformation is to be found in the undue reliance of its leaders on the civil power. They made their appeal in the first instance to princes rather than to the people instructed by the word of God. This compelled them to invest civil government with a kind of episcopate. The Puritans, in gratitude to the Continental Reformers, adopted their system, to the injury of truth and the peril of freedom. What would have been the gain to all if, in 1562, the ministers, pressed in

conscience, and enfeebled by self-contradiction, had anticipated the exodus to which they were driven a century later.

After the turmoil of various inquisitorial examinations, Mr. Deering retired into private life, and, wasted by consumption, sank gradually for three years. In this state of protracted affliction he wrote many letters to his friends, of whom he had a large circle. The members of his own family did not conceal their pain and disappointment in his exclusion from all hope of church preferment. He endeavoured to cheer them under the trial, and to justify his own course.

Writing to his brother Edward, November 19, 1573, he says: "If I have the loss in worldly things, I am content to bear it, and God will supply my want where I am able to do nothing. I had rather be your brother, not worth a groat, but having a good conscience to pray for you, than have (as I might) a great living, and encumber my conscience with much sin. And good brother Deering, here follow me: you shall be a great deal richer than you are; study the Scriptures, read books, be able to reason in your faith, especially, and above all, have a lively feeling of God, that you think more vile of all the glory of the world, than of the dust of the earth; you know we must all perish, and you must walk the way of all flesh: our good parents, both father and mother, they are gone before; you do but wait the time, and you must go after; your goods and land must abide behind, and the riches of your mind, they are only your own. You are my eldest brother, and you know not how glad I would be to see you go before me in religion: God hath given you neither a light head nor little understanding; if you would apply yourself unto knowledge, you should then reap the fruit of your labour in more gladness of heart than yet you can imagine; begin once but a little, and taste how sweet the Lord is, and you shall feel the riches of his glory. . . . For Master Secretary, or any other of such high calling, I love them in the Lord, even as I love mine own soul, and will pray for them while they and I shall live. Though I bear the loss of worldly things, yet by the grace of Christ, I will never lose a good

conscience; and though they be angry with me, yet I will not leave to pray for them, and commit my cause unto God; He will one day multiply His graces, where He hath so well begun, and they shall (I trust) be thoroughly taught, whom God hath so far instructed.

“Do not dissuade me from going upright in the gospel. But for my comfort, if you see me grieved, let me see in you how you profess the gospel; and persuade yourself of this, that a lively zeal and holy knowledge in you, and in my sister, shall make me gladder than any bishoprick in England.”

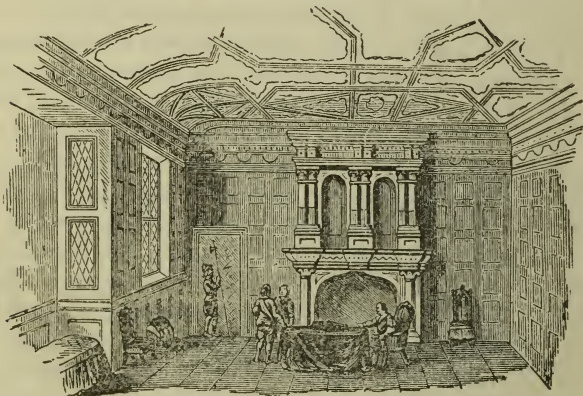
“December 24, 1573. I am forbidden to preach; which grieveth me most: their slanderous reports do hurt me much where I would fainest please, so far as I may in the fear of God. But howsoever things are, it is a blessed sentence which he hath spoken, who will surely perform it. To them that love God, all things happen to the best; and pray for me, good brother, that I may hold steadfast that love, and waver not in the faith of the gospel in which we have assured life.

“If I would lose the truth, I could win the world: but that were a miserable change. God bless us and send us peace, make us wise in the gospel, and steadfast unto the end. My wife hath been, I thank God, in no trouble, neither was any toward her, that I know of; if any fall, God hath made her rich in grace and knowledge to give account of her doing. D. W., on Friday last, as I was about to preach, forbade me in her Majesty’s name; so I stand now forbidden, not by the bishops, but by our princess, whom I beseech God make a happy governor in His church, and many years to give peace unto His people. If we prayed as we should, God would make perfect the good work He hath begun, and make us see the peace of Jerusalem all the days of our life.”

With the decay of his general health, there was the evident renewal of the “inward man” day by day. Instructed by the sense of his own frailty, he addressed letters of consolation to the afflicted of his kindred and acquaintance of the most touching and edifying nature.

In a letter to Mrs. Barrett (1574), after a description of his

distressing symptoms, he says: "This is my health that God giveth me. But let Him do His will. He is the God of my life, and one day will abolish these things, and make us feel health in immortality." To Lady Mildmay he says (January 10, 1576): "Life is sweet unto us, and we are loath to make our beds in the dark:" and then he descants on the resurrection and the glories of heaven, as if he had already entered within the gates. So he went on in the full assurance of hope, until on the 26th June, 1576, the hour of departure came. As the sun shone on his pale and placid countenance, he said: "As there is only one sun in the world, so there is only one righteousness, and one communion of saints. As for my death, I bless God I find and feel so much comfort and joy in my soul, that if I were put to my choice, whether to die or live, I would a thousand times choose death than life, if it was the holy will of God."



THE STAR CHAMBER. PAGE 25.

III.

ROBERT BROWNE,

AND

The Martyrs of Bury St. Edmunds.

“How like a Roman Sydney bowed his head,
And Russell’s milder blood the scaffold wet !
But these had fallen for profitless regret,
Had not thy holy church her champion’s bred,
And claims from other worlds inspirited
The star of liberty to rise. Nor yet,
(Grave this within thy heart !) if spiritual things
Be lost through apathy, or scorn, or fear,
Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,
However hardly won, or justly dear.
What came from Heaven, to Heaven by nature clings,
And if dis severed thence, its course is short.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE Christian people who united themselves in church fellowship in 1568, had strong claims on the sympathy of all who valued sincerity in religion, and the spontaneous zeal which springs from love to the truth. The religious society they formed, though few in number, was a practical embodiment of real conviction, and as such, at a time of enfeebling compromise, it should have commanded respect.

It received, however, no friendly recognition from any quarter. The members of the newly-formed church were witnesses to truth, long neglected and forgotten, and therefore unwelcome.

It is well known that the Separatists were exemplary in

conduct, benevolent in spirit, and remarkably patriotic. Their loyalty in its disinterestedness was almost romantic. Queen Elizabeth had no more faithful subjects. But all this availed them nothing, as a protection, against the founders of the Anglican Establishment. With strange inconsistency, though professedly Protestant, the prelates of the national church, just separated from Rome, would allow no separation from themselves. They recognized the authority of the Word of God as the final standard of appeal, both in doctrine and in church discipline, but they insisted, on pain of imprisonment, and eventually of death, that no objection should be made against the Book of Common Prayer. They asserted no claim to infallibility, neither did they for a moment contend that strict conformity was essential to salvation; but having conceded to the sovereign ecclesiastical supremacy, they would have obedience to her authority enforced with the utmost rigour. Congregationalism, according to this view, was not so much heresy as sedition.

All the powers, both of church and of state, were invoked to crush the sect everywhere spoken against. The means employed for this purpose were by no means original. The case would only admit of the ordinary methods of suppression—the prohibition of unlicensed printing, the prevention of religious meetings, and the silencing of ministers.

The Puritans found an asylum for the press in places least suspected. John Brown, chaplain of the Duchess of Suffolk, was protected by her grace in Southwark, and almost within sight of Winchester Hall, the residence of the bishop, he conducted, for several years, his printing operations.

The family of the duchess were connected with Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk, and probably in that town the same facilities were afforded. It is certain, at least, that it became the centre of wide spread Puritan influence. Unconsciously, to a great extent, the earnest preaching of several ministers in the district, prepared the way for the more advanced principles of the Separatists. The growing interest felt in the ministration of the gospel we may infer from the following address to

the Privy Council, signed by upwards of one hundred and seventy of the inhabitants, amongst whose names we find that of WILLIAM BREWSTER :—

“To the right Honourable the Lords and others of her Majesty’s most Privy Council.

“In most lamentable and humble manner complain unto your honour, the poor inhabitants of the town of Bury St. Edmunds, in the county of Suffolk, beseeching your lordships to take pity upon our miserable and wretched estate, whereunto presently we are plunged, and in the same likely for ever to stick fast, if by your most gracious and honourable means we be not delivered. Your honours are not ignorant *that our town hath been of long time instructed in the gospel of salvation by many*, but in these latter years most plentifully and painfully taught by two godly and faithful ministers, MR. HANDSON and MR. GAYTON.* The first whereof hath been about ten years a preacher among us, the other about five years; by whose diligent means, ourselves, wives, children, and servants, have been sincerely taught, not only the true worship and service of God, but all Christian obedience to her Majesty and civil government, together with what charitable affection we should maintain peace and all deeds of love one with another, by which their painful labours, it is come to pass (God by His spirit so blessing the same) that not only we have attained to some measure of knowledge and conscience to practice in part our understanding, but also a love and inward affection to con-

* Mr. Gayton, in connection with NICOLAS CRANE and others, addressed a letter to Mr. CARTWRIGHT, dated London, May 25, 1577, in which they say: “By the help of God, we will labour in all things, to the utmost of our power, to be found faithful and approved before God and men; and, therefore, we will not betray the truth which it hath pleased God, in His great goodness, to make known unto us. You well know we do nothing *contentiously*; therein we are clear before God and men. But we wish you to understand, that the iniquitous times in which we live, and the great trials which we, as well as you, have to endure in the cause of God, and a thousand such afflictions, shall not, the Lord helping us, make us shrink from the maintenance of His truth.”

tinue our increase, and going forward in either even to the end, knowing that unless we run out, we get no prize; and so much the more truthfully have we been stirred and drawn into [this course], for that the lives and conversations of our said preachers have been so blameless and unspotted from all appearance of evil, that though sundry enemies have attempted their discredit, yet as the sun, cleared from the blackest clouds, appeareth much brighter than before, so hath the innocence of the said preachers always hitherto, by the mercy of God, and your lordships' favours, not lost but gained credit by the false accusers. Yet, nevertheless, neither their approved integrity nor wonderful patience, which for all their injuries increased, have not opened their mouths to revenge, leaving the judgment of their enemies to the Lord God, could any way prevail to stop the passages of some men's malice; but they have so continually afflicted them by untrue accusations, that as men not able to support so intolerable burdens, Mr. Gayton, by their dealing, a quarter past, departed away from us, whom they have threatened being about to pursue. Mr. Handson, now at last wearied with their violent and continual practices, hath also yielded up his place, to the great danger and unspeakable grief of the inhabitants of the town, and also to all well affected to the truth, and her Majesty, in the whole country round about, which received by their confessions singular commodity by their ministry. So that, in a short space, we, that of late were most blessed with the immortal seed of the Word of God, are made a gazing stock to all others by the view of cursed barrennesses, and so are like to continue, if your lordships, as the Lord's lieutenant upon earth, find not some redress for the same. The cunning to convey this [increase] of mischief unto us is no doubt very deep and secret, for they are wise in their generation, and see, to their great grief, that God Himself, her Majesty, and your honours, do maintain the cause of the gospel, and punisheth every one that opposeth himself against it in any open or known action. And therefore are they enforced to retire themselves to a more close handling of their wicked and ungodly purposes; for not long since they plotted a most

subtle and dangerous devise, utterly and for ever to have beaten the Word, and the preachers of it, out of our town, which was by withdrawing their contributions; and the same very likely to have taken effect, if God by some means had not moved your honourable affections, by your most godly letters directed to our justices, and their painful travail in the execution, by way of prevention, to interrupt and stop the course of their malice, but now seeing themselves to be commanded from so high authority, they have for the most part yielded, not having any colour of defence. From Bury, the 6th of August, 1582."

These Puritan memorialists evidently had no idea that the gospel could have free course, except by the favour of the Privy Council, or that the services of their ministers could be retained if their enemies were suffered to withdraw their subscriptions. But there were at the time men in the common prison of Bury St. Edmunds who were prepared to sacrifice their lives that the truth might be maintained in its divine simplicity, and free from all worldly accretions.

The views of the Separatists were now earnestly advocated by Robert Browne, son of Mr. Browne, of Tolethorpe, and at one time chaplain of the Duke of Norfolk. Notwithstanding the eccentricity of his subsequent career, his writings on the question of church polity were characterized by great clearness and force.

He appealed to the New Testament in a manner that secured conviction in the minds of thoughtful men who were anxious, in all things, to act according to the divine standard. John Copping and Elias Thacker, in conjunction with others, were active in promoting the circulation of his books.

There is reason to suppose that plans for publication were formed in their prison conferences. Browne, the most sanguine of the three, gave himself to the work of ubiquitous agitation. He was so convinced of the soundness of the principles they held, that he thought they should be adopted at once by all the parochial congregations in the country, without waiting for the sanction of the magistrate. The process of planting was too

tedious for his ardent temperament, and he expected to call the stately forest into existence as by the wand of the magician.

His zeal attracted the attention of Dr. Freke, the bishop of the diocese, and excited his alarm. A correspondence arose which clearly indicates the state of things. The bishop opened the case to Lord Burleigh, in the following communication:—

“My duty to your lordship remembered. Being informed of many great disorders in the town of Bury and country thereabout, as well in the clergy as in the laity; whereof, besides the general complaint, the High Commissioners of Bury, understanding of the same disorders, advertized me thereof by letters, requiring me to take order therein, I did of late, in person, with others of my associates in Commission Ecclesiastical for these parts, visit the said town. In the which, finding great divisions amongst the people, some whereof are very desirous, in dutiful affection, to have her Majesty’s proceeding observed; others, on the contrary, being given to fantastical innovations; there were, moreover, divers matters of importance exhibited and proved against Mr. Handson, who is, in very deed, the only man there blowing the coals whereof this fire is kindled. It was therefore thought meet, for the better quiet of that place, that he should be suspended from preaching, unless he could be contented to enter into bond to her Majesty’s use, hereafter to teach and preach the Lord sincerely and purely, without impugning or inveighing against the Communion Book, the order of government, and laws of this realm now established. Which offer refusing, he was, and is, thereupon inhibited to preach; whereof I have thought good, not only to inform your lordship, but also the rest of my lords of the Council, if so it should like your lordship. Wherein this bearer is to attend and follow your lordship’s directions; having for your and their lordships’ better information, sent herewith a copy of the article, and proof thereof, preferred against Mr. Handson, referring the procedure therein taken to your lordship’s judgment and consideration. And herewith I send unto your lordship other articles ministered against *one Robert Browne, a minister*, and his several answers thereunto; the said party

being *lately apprehended in the country*, upon complaint made by godly preachers, for delivering unto the people corrupt and contentious doctrine, contained and set down more at large in the same articles. His arrogant spirit of reproving being such as is to be marvelled at, *the man being also to be feared, lest, if he were at liberty, he would seduce the vulgar sort of the people, who greatly depend on him*, assembling themselves, to the number of a hundred at a time, in private houses and conventicles to hear him, not without danger of some thereabout. And so I humbly betake your honour to God's tuition. Your lordship's humbly at commandment, EDMOND NORWICH. Ludham, 19th April, 1581."

Two days after this epistle of the bishop, Lord Burleigh replies: "After my very hearty commendations to your lordship: whereas, I understand, that one Browne, a preacher, is, by your lordship, and others of the ecclesiastical commission, committed to the custody of the sheriff of Norfolk, where he remains a prisoner, for some matters of offence uttered by him by way of preaching; wherein I perceived, by sight of some letters, written by certain godly preachers in your lordship's diocese, he hath been dealt with, and by them dissuaded from that course he hath taken. Forasmuch as he is my kinsman, if he be son to him whom I take him to be, and that his error seemeth to proceed of zeal, rather than of malice, I do therefore wish he were charitably conferred with and reformed; which course I pray your lordship may be taken with him, either by your lordship, or such as your lordship shall assign for that purpose; and in case there shall not follow thereof such success as may be to your liking, that then you would be content to permit him to repair hither to London, to be further dealt with, as I shall take order for, upon his coming, for which purpose I have written a letter to the sheriff, if your lordship shall like thereof. And so I bid your lordship right heartily farewell. From the court at Westminster, this 21st of April, 1581."

Further information, respecting the movements of Robert Browne, was communicated to Lord Burleigh by Sir Robert

Jermyn. Writing from Rusbrooke, 25th July, 1581, he says: "Mr. Browne, a minister, coming by chance to Bury, and advertisement being given unto me, I sent for him, and moved him with the best reasons I had to be careful of his proceeding, advising him, first, to consider what affection towards his well-being your lordship had showed in his deliverance; then, how dangerous his course seemed in the opinions of many godly and honest men, and how ready the adversaries of the truth would be (if the end of this his singular conceit might not be warranted with the word and Christian policy) to slander and discredit the profession and professors of the truth.

"*His answers, I must needs say, had many things that were godly and reasonable, and, as I think, to be wished and prayed for; but at the same time some other things strange and unsound, and the means to put the same in execution, as they reached beyond his and my calling, being private, so thought them even dangerous to be but retained in opinion.*

"If, therefore, your lordship would please the rather, at my humble suit, to advise him to a more careful regard of himself in so deep and dangerous a matter (*the man being both young in years and experience*), or if not, to threaten him that he should be very sharply censured to the example of others, I presume your lordship should do a good and honourable deed in staying him from going too far, and making of him a man very able, so very fit to yield the church his profitable service."

It was somewhat difficult to restrain the impetuosity of the young reformer. The bishop was compelled to trouble the Lord Treasurer once more. On the second of August, 1581, he wrote to the following effect:—

"My duty unto your good lordship most humbly remembered. May it please your lordship to understand, though Mr. Browne's late coming into my diocese, and teaching strange and dangerous doctrine in all disordered manner, hath greatly troubled the whole country, and brought many to great disobedience of all laws and magistrates, yet by the good aid and help of my Lord Chief Justice, and Mr. Justice Anderson, his associate, the chiefest of such factions were so bridled, and

the rest of their followers so greatly dismayed, as I verily hoped of much good and quietness to have thereof ensued, *had not the said Browne now returned, contrary to my expectation,* and greatly prejudiced these *their good proceedings, who having private meetings in such close and secret manner as that I know not possibly how to suppress the same.* Am very sorry to foresee that, touching this my diocese, which must, in short time, by him and other disordered persons, which only seek the disturbance of the church, be brought to pass. And, therefore, the careful duty I ought to have to the country being my charge, enforceth me *to crave most earnestly your lordship's help in suppressing him especially,* that no further inconvenience follow by this his return; and procuring my Lord Chief Justice and Mr. Anderson such thanks from her Majesty for their painful travail in that behalf, that thereby they may be encouraged to go still forwards in the same; and herewithal, if it would please your lordship to give me your good advice, how to prevent such dangers as, through the strange dealings of some of the gentlemen in Suffolk about Bury, is like to ensue, I should be much bound to your honour for the same; which gentlemen in winking at, if not of policy, procuring the disordered sort to go forwards in their evil attempts, and discouraging the staid and wiser sort of preachers—as by sundry letters which I send your lordship by this bringer may appear more plainly unto your honour—will in time, I fear me, hazard the overthrow of all religion, if it be not in due time wisely prevented.”

The anxious bishop saw clearly that if Christian people were suffered to form themselves into churches in London, Bury St. Edmunds, Norwich, and other places, as the primitive disciples formed churches in Antioch, Ephesus, and Thessalonica, there would be an end to the ecclesiastical domination of the prelates—hence his deep concern. Robert Browne withdrew from Bury St. Edmunds, and for the present we shall leave him to turn our attention to the prisoners for the sake of the gospel still left in bonds.

The bishop, disappointed in his purpose to break down the

kinsman of the Lord Treasurer, was more bitterly determined to make sure of his humbler victims. Mr. Andrews, one of the prison authorities, reported, on the 1st of September, 1578, that though John Copping had been two years in the gaol, and during that time continually admonished by learned preachers, he still retained his opinions. In his conversation with friends who came to see him, he disseminated his views, and many were convinced by his statements. It was necessary, therefore, in their opinion, that steps should be immediately taken to remove him from prison, because of the harm done by his sentiments to the people of Bury. But if removed to any other place there would be equal danger that the infection of his sentiments would spread. The officers were directed to watch him closely, and to note down any words that might be spoken by him that would warrant his indictment for a capital offence. The inquisition was exceedingly tedious, and many months passed away without finding the desired matter of accusation. Ultimately the object was gained. The depositions, still extant, were formally signed. In the first place it came to their knowledge that Copping had refused to have his child baptized with godfathers and godmothers, and had said that none but a faithful Christian minister should conduct the service. But the second and more serious offence consisted in treasonable words spoken by him in the warmth of discussion, to the effect that the Queen having failed to carry out the purpose of a full reformation, on her accession to the throne, was "perjured." Edmund Grinder, the keeper, John Gill, the chaplain, with the under keeper, and two fellow prisoners, signed the statement that they heard him either say this or something of the same meaning.

With a court so willing to convict, and judges so eager to inflict the last penalty of the law, the slender nature of the evidence was of little importance. JOHN COPPING, with ELIAS THACKER, after their long imprisonment, were arraigned at the bar in July, 1583, with Thomas Gibson. The offence with which they were charged, contrary to expectation, was not that of treasonable words, but the circulation of the books

written by Robert Browne and Robert Harrison, his coadjutor. Nothing is known of their conduct at the trial, what testimony they gave, or the spirit in which they made their Christian defence. The conferences they had with their Christian brethren, their farewell messages, and the scene of their agonizing separation from their wives and children, all this is left to the imagination. This only we know, that they died rather than prevaricate in matters of religion, or impound the truth they firmly believed. Four justices appealed in their behalf for a reprieve, but with no success.* Whatever sorrow might be felt by the spectators of their execution, the Lord Chief Justice was satisfied with his sanguinary task. His self-complacent letter to the Lord Treasurer, in the original, is before us. He says: "Elias Fawker [Thacker], and John Copping, and Thomas Gibson, were convicted for dispersing of Browne's books and Harrison's books. The first two were executed in the time of the assizes, Elias upon Thursday, Copping upon Friday. *They both acknowledged her Majesty as ruler civilly (as civil magistrate)*, for such is their term, and no further; and although Dr. Still and others travailed and conferred with them, yet they at the very time of their death commended all things in the said books to be good and godly. Gibson was also convicted for the treasonable inscription† he gave to be

* Articles were exhibited against Sir Robert Jermyn and other justices of the peace for the interest they had taken in the Separatists. In defence they answer: "That Copping and Thacker, being committed to prison five or six years past, and often convented before the judges of our assizes, so long as there was hope to do any good unto them by Christian persuasion and counsel, we were means unto the judges for their freedom. But when, by experience, we found that neither our entreating, nor the often godly references and labours of divers learned and godly pastors (which we only procured) could anything prevail, we gave them up to their froward wills, and became earnest suitors, both to the bishops and judges, that they might be removed out of prison, for *fear of infecting others*, which we could never obtain at the bishop's hand. But he [the Bishop of Norwich] hath kept them here without offering them any means for their conversion; rather, as we presume, for *stales to catch and endanger men with, than for any good intended to themselves or any other.*"

† A quotation from Scripture.

painted about her Majesty's arms. The execution of this man we have stayed for divers causes, especially that in words (I know not his thought) he condemneth the errors in the books. There were also five ministers convicted for depraving the Book of Common Prayer, three for not observing the order therein contained, whereof Mr. Handson was one, who was offered at his arraignment, if he would confess openly that he did mislike no part of the book, or that the book was good and godly, that he should be spared. Yet would not he do the same, but confesseth there was no blasphemy nor papistry therein, and would go no further. The rest standeth in mislike of some part thereof. There were also three convicted for words, whereof one was a minister; and one for saying that if Elias Thacker had been executed at the former assizes, then there would have been five hundred good followers more than was at his execution. After he had stood at the pillory here, we sent him to the bishop to be further punished by him. There be divers ministers also who were indicted; some at the former assizes, some this last, who did not appear, so we could not proceed against them. Now for the state of the country. There be very many young ministers of small learning and discretion that will not keep the order of the Book of Common Prayer. Many men persons that will not come to the church to service unless there be a sermon, and so there are divers presumptions that there remain of Copping and Elias' opinions. But I trust the example of these assizes will do much among them, and that our trouble shall be less at the next than it was now. The justices of peace have promised to keep the people in good order and quietness. And thus I have troubled your lordship with a tedious matter. Desiring your lordship to pardon me therein, and take my leave of the same. From Bury, this sixth of July, 1583.

“After the writing hereof, before our assizes ended, the great inquest hath presented above forty persons, ministers, and others, for not observing the Book of Common Prayer, and making conventicles. Your lordship's most bounden at commandment,

“CHRISTOPHER WRAY.”

Such a document from the pen of the Lord Chief Justice of England, written on the bench, is in itself conclusive evidence of the length to which spiritual despotism would go, even under a rule nominally protestant. It was by the willing sacrifice of life on the part of these obscure martyrs, as yet scarcely recognized in our national history, that the existence of freedom in England was rendered possible.

The name of WILLIAM DENNIS, of Thetford, in Norfolk, a "godly man, and faithful in his place," must be added to their number.

We take little interest in following Robert Browne after his retreat from Bury. We find him at Middleburgh in 1581, and three years after in Scotland, and from thence he seems to have returned to London. Lord Burleigh, writing from Richmond, July 17, 1584, says to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "I am content that your grace, and my lord of London, where I fear Browne is, should use him as your wisdoms think meet. I have cause to pity the poor man."

From the letters of Lord Burleigh to his father, Mr. Anthony Browne, it would appear that it was arranged that for a time he should be a prisoner at home on his parole:—"After my very hearty commendations. Understanding that your son, Robert Browne, had been sent for by my lord bishop of Canterbury, to answer to such matters as he was to be charged with, contained in a book made by him, and published in print as it was thought by his means, I thought good, considering he was your son, and of my blood, to send unto my lord of Canterbury in his behalf, that he might find what reasonable favour he could show him, before whom, I perceive, he hath answered in some good sort; and although I think he will not deny the making of the book, yet by no means will he confess to be acquainted with the publishing or printing of it. He hath besides yielded unto his lordship such further contentment, as he is contented (the rather at my notion) to discharge him; and, therefore, for that he purposeth to repair to you, I have thought good to accompany him with these my letters, and to pray you, for this cause or any of his former

dealings, not to withdraw from the relics of some fond opinions of his, *which will be the better done, if he be dealt withal in some kind and temperate manner.* And so I bid you very heartily farewell. From my house, near the Savoy, this 8th of October, 1584." On the 17th of February, 1585, Lord Burleigh writes: "I perceive by your letters that you have little or no hopes of your son's conformity, as you had when you received him into your house; and, therefore, you seem desirous that you might have liberty to remove him farther off from you, as either to Stamford or some other place, which I know no cause but you may very well and lawfully do, where I wish he might better be persuaded to conform himself, for his own good, and yours and his friends' comfort."

The following extracts from the Minute Book of St. Olave's Grammar School, in Southwark, show his humiliating position:—

"*Item.* The 21st day of November, A.D., 1586, was chosen to be schoolmaster, Robert Browne, upon his good behaviour, and observing these articles hereunder written—

"First. That you shall not intermeddle with the minister, or disturb the quiet of the parishioners by keeping any conventicles or conference with any suspected or disorderly persons.

"Secondly. That you shall bring your children to sermons and lectures in the church, and there accompany them for their better government.

"Thirdly. If any error shall be found in you, and you are convinced thereof, that you shall, upon admonition thereof, revoke it, and conform yourself to the doctrine of the Church of England.

"Fourthly. You shall read in your school no other catechism than is authorized by public authority.

"Fifthly. That you shall, at convenient times, communicate in this parish, according to the laws.

"Sixthly. Not being contented to answer and keep these articles, no longer to keep the schoolmastership, but to avoid it.

“Subscribed by me, ROBERT BROWNE, according to my answers, before all the governors, and the distinctions and exceptions before named.

“These governors whose names followeth were present at the choosing of the said Robert Browne, viz. :—Mr. Absolom Parson, Thomas Smith, minister, Ric. Sampson, Ric. Hutton, Robert Couche, Tho. Pinden, Ric. Denman, Ric. Pinfold, Jo. Byrd, Tho. Westoray, Jo. Selbey, Robt. Feltham, Ric. Atkinson, and Peter Metcalfe.”

The manhood of the poor schoolmaster of St. Olave's was squeezed out of him most effectually. The plan of Lord Burleigh succeeded. Having tamed his kinsman by these means, he sent him with the following note to the Bishop of Peterborough :—

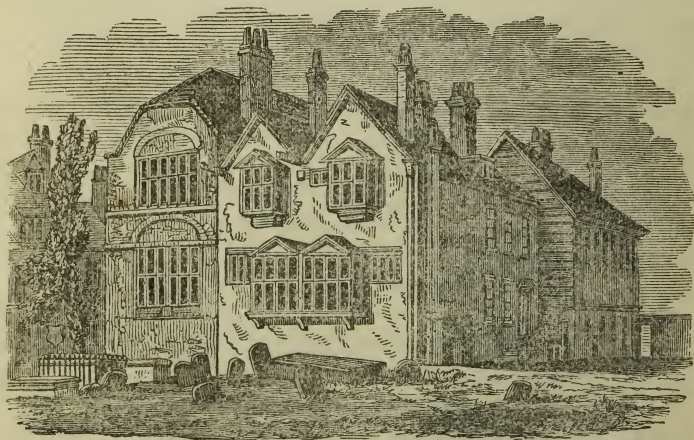
“After my very hearty commendations to your lordship. Although it might seem somewhat strange that I should write to your lordship in favour of this bearer, Robert Browne, who hath been so notably disliked in the world for his strange manner of writing, and opinions held by him; yet, seeing he hath now a good time forsaken the same, and submitted himself to the order and government in the church, I have been the rather moved to recommend him to your lordship's favour, and to pray you, if haply any conceit may be in you that there should remain any relics in him of his former erroneous opinions, your lordship would confer with him, and finding him dutiful and conformable, as I hope you shall, to receive him again into the ministry, and to give him your best means and help for some ecclesiastical preferment; wherein I am the more willing to do him good, and am not a little glad at the reclaiming him, being of kindred unto me, as your lordship, I think, knows. And so I very heartily bid your lordship farewell. From my house, near the Savoy, the 20th of June, 1589.”

Poor Browne seems to have nearly lost his reason after he had sacrificed his conscience. In an original letter, now before us, dated April, 1590, he tells Lord Burleigh that he has written a treatise, by the use of which, “in one year, scholars

may well learn together those arts which scarcely in ten years they untowardly learn in the universities." All he asks is, that he may read public lectures. "For," he says, "as Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and Pythagoras made many thousand scholars, and that without any public maintenance and charge, and in very few years—so much rather in the arts and points of religion more truly handled, and utterly differing from them all—I would hope, by your lordship's good countenance, only to perform much rather the like, and that in all quietness also, not meddling to condemn or control any learned man or any kind of profession."

He received the preferment in due time to a church in Northamptonshire, and at the same time he was advanced to the place in the pillory history reserves for the temporizing and unfaithful. The relation of Robert Browne to Congregationalism resembles that of Judas Iscariot to Christianity.

It is some satisfaction to know that ROBERT HARRISON, who was colleague with Browne, remained steadfast. He became pastor of the church at Middleburgh, in Holland, and there died.



GRAMMAR SCHOOL OF ST. OLAVE'S, SOUTHWARK.

IV.

OLIVER PIGG AND ROBERT WRIGHT,

AND

Elasticity of Conscience.

“ That which you call *rebellion*
Is but the changed obedience which we pay
To changing dispensations. The true rebel
Is he who worships for the powers *that are*
Powers that *are not*.”

YENDYS.

QUEEN ELIZABETH ascended the throne as a “nursing mother” to the church. On the day of her coronation a pageant was exhibited in the course of the procession in Cheapside—Time leading Truth from a cave where she had been concealed; Truth presented an English Bible to the Queen, which she received with thanks, and pressing it to her heart, declared that she “would often read the book.” The people rejoiced in this regal homage to the Word of God, and expected much from the new sovereign, as the daughter of Anne Boleyn, the friend of the Reformation. The illusion, however, soon vanished. The Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity could leave no room for doubt that the Queen would follow in the steps of her father, Henry VIII. Before two years had passed since the clergy had been forcibly severed from the Church of Rome, Archbishop Parker prescribed for them an oath in which they should declare that the doctrines they had taught were false. But it was not until 1562 that the

groove for the national conscience was prepared in the articles of the Church of England, to be rigorously enforced and made retrospective, notwithstanding the open avowal of conflicting opinions.

The confidence and hope so prematurely expressed by the protestant people was exchanged for solicitude and apprehension. This natural anxiety was relieved to some extent by the declaration of her Majesty, in 1570, that "she would not allow any of her subjects to be molested, either by examination or inquisition in any matter of faith, as long as they should profess the Christian faith, not gainsaying the authority of the Holy Scriptures, or the articles of faith contained in the creeds Apostolic and Catholic." The breathing time was only short and uncertain. On the 20th of August, 1572, the royal mandate was issued to enforce exact uniformity. The Queen insisted "that none should be suffered to decline, either on the left hand or on the right hand, from the direct line limited by authority." Measures of repression were adopted accordingly, and the effect of them history has recorded in the early Puritan struggle with the writhings of conscience, and the severe trials and sufferings by which it was accompanied. The massacre in Paris on Bartholomew's day, the 30th of August, 1572, astounded the English court, and excited some apprehension for the safety of the throne, but the work of more refined persecution by the Anglican prelates continued with little interruption.

One step in the course of ecclesiastical despotism only preceded another of greater severity. A further proclamation was issued on the 20th of October, 1573. "The Queen's Majesty being right sorry to understand that the order of Common Prayer set forth by authority of Parliament, is now of late despised and spoken against, for speedy remedy whereof, her Majesty straitly chargeth and commandeth [all in authority, ecclesiastic and ordinary] to put in execution the act for the uniformity of Common Prayer and administration of the Sacraments, with all diligence and severity, neither favouring nor dissembling with one person nor other who doth neglect,

despise, or seek to alter the godly orders and rites set forth in the said book. But if any person shall, by public preaching, writing, or printing, condemn, despise, or dispraise the orders contained in the said book, they shall immediately apprehend him, and cause him to be imprisoned *until he hath answered to the law*, upon pain that the chief officers being present at any such preaching, and *the whole parish shall answer* for their contempt and negligence.

“Likewise, if any shall forbear to come to the common prayer and receive the sacraments of the church, according to the order in the book allowed, upon no just and lawful cause, all such they [the authorities] shall enquire of and see punished with more care and diligence than heretofore hath been done.

“And if any person shall, either in private houses or in public places, make assemblies, and therein use other rites of common prayer and administration of the sacraments than is prescribed in the said book, or shall maintain in their houses any persons notoriously charged, by books or preachings, to attempt the alteration of the said orders, they shall see such persons punished with all severity, according to the laws of this realm, by pains appointed in the said act.”

The effect of these repressive measures on the Puritan ministers was crushing. They tried in every way to evade subscription, but the spies employed by the bishops were too vigilant to suffer them to escape. Remonstrances and appeals were addressed to the Parliament, to the Privy Council, and to the Lord Treasurer. The best preachers were silenced and supplanted by ministers incapable of teaching Christian truth in any form, and notoriously vicious in their conduct. Congregations petitioned in vain for the restoration of their faithful pastors. It was determined to maintain the form of the Establishment, though it should involve the exclusion of the gospel and the moral debasement of the whole community. The embarrassment occasioned by this state of things to the Puritan party we may infer from the following petition, presented by the ministers of Norfolk to the Lords of the Council in 1584:—

“In most humble and lamentable wise complaineth unto your honourable lordships, your poor desolate and obedient orators, certain ministers of the Word of God in Norfolk, whose names are underwritten. That whereas your said orators, living under the laws of God and this realm, have showed ourselves in all things true, faithful, and obedient subjects, according to our vocation, as well in the administration of God’s holy word and sacraments, as in due obedience to authority and higher power, and striving to keep a good conscience before God and man, we have laboured to preserve the unity of the church, in all quiet toleration of rites and ceremonies established, so that we have not maintained any division or separation from the same church in any respect, but have resisted, with all our power, such as from time to time have envied the peace thereof, viz., both Papists and other heretics, and the late *schismatics of the faction of Browne*; whereof, beside the testimonies of our own conscience in the sight of God, and the fruit of our labours in our several charges, we doubt not but that the whole country that knoweth us will witness.

“Thus, notwithstanding the occasion of certain articles sent from the Lord Grace of Canterbury, we are convented before our Ordinary, and commanded to subscribe to three of them.

“To the first, respecting her Majesty’s supreme authority, we most willingly yielded to set our hands—our hearts being wholly bent to her Majesty’s service, to spend both life and living. To the second, concerning the full and whole allowance of everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, and that ordaining bishops, priests, and deacons, we could not so readily yield, though always thinking and speaking of the same reverently, and using it and no other in our ministry. Yet upon reasons we desired respite in that matter.

“First, the law requireth no such subscription, but contenting itself with obedience, we desired the benefit of subjects not to be pressed until law required it.

Secondly, the preface in the book annexed, giving all men

leave, in cases of doubt, to resort for resolution of such doubts to their Ordinary, we having, as we are persuaded, just occasion to doubt of some things, offered the same accordingly to our Ordinary, who promised us conference for our further resolution. Before which time we were again called, and, without conference or resolution, required simply to subscribe, which we could not with safe conscience do, being in doubt of some things.

“To the third article we yielded our consent, so far as by law we are bound. These answers notwithstanding, and without performance of his promise of conscience with us, we are proceeded against by canonical admonition, and are now in danger of deprivation, as many more of our brethren in Norfolk are likewise, to our great grief, especially for the hurt of our flocks, which are so dear unto us. It may therefore please your honour, even for the tender mercy of God in Christ, to take pity upon us and our poor distressed people, whose danger is now more than in times past, *by means of that schism of Browne, from which we had much ado to keep them.* Even then, when by our ministry there was remarkable plenty of preaching, not only in our own parishes, but also in our neighbour churches about us, which, if they shall see altogether wanting, and the places supplied with such as can do little or nothing, as other places are, we fear the unruly sort will make that sect in the church which we had rather be dead (if God so please) than live to behold. How great decay also this dealing will be to learning, your wisdoms see, considering that it being so much disliked of the people, few will set their sons to learn, and they which shall be set to it will rather turn their studies any way than to serve in the ministry, when they see it tied to so hard conditions. We leave to complain of our miserable poverty, who neither have learned, nor may lawfully use, as we understand, any trade to succour the necessity of ourselves, our wives, and children, whose food should have been the fruit of our labours, which we have this year sustained already, whereof we are threatened to be deprived without recompense. These things hath made

us bold to come to your honours to entreat redress according as your wisdoms shall think best for God's glory and the edifying of His church, whereof we know your honours have a special care; and for our parts we shall not only be more encouraged in doing our duties in our charges, but shall especially be bound to pray for your honours to Almighty God, who long bless her Majesty with continuance of health and peace, and your honours with graces fit for so high personages." Signed by twenty ministers.

In these general appeals we hear the groanings of the mass of earnest protestants, but in the examination of the case of individual sufferers we shall gain a more distinct impression of the demoralising influence of subscription enforced by penalty. It is not the lot of the faithful martyr that we have so much to deplore, as the ruin of character and the breaking down of the spirit in those who had not the martyr's firmness nor his simplicity of aim.

Let us return to the prison at Bury St. Edmunds. The Lord Chief Justice, after the execution of Copping and Thacker, left a miscellaneous batch of prisoners for religion to be dealt with according to circumstances. Undecided cases of this sort offered considerable temptation to the cupidity of the officials employed under the direction of the bishop. The High Commission had to replenish its exchequer as well as to maintain its authority. Men, keenly alive to their own pecuniary advantage, were employed to make a valuation of the property held by the dissidents likely to be brought into trouble, and make a periodical return.

It was for their interest to prolong suits and to repeat indictments, because of the legal fees; and little as they understood as to the rights of conscience, they could not be charged by their superiors with any want of zeal in accumulating fines and gaol expenses. MR. OLIVER PIGG, a clergyman in Norfolk, had the misfortune to displease his diocesan, and was amongst the disconsolate remnant to which we have referred. The precise offence with which he was charged was that of putting the question in the Baptismal Service, "Dost thou

believe?" not to the baby, as directed in the Book of Common Prayer, but to the parents of the child. Custom has so reconciled the people in our own time to this "pretty dialogue," in which the infant is also asked, "Wilt *thou* be baptized in this faith?" that they do not see its incongruity, but OLIVER PIGG was so struck with the strangeness of it, that he thought it would be more suitable to ask the father and mother presenting the infant for baptism, if they really believed the gospel, and recognised the Christian obligations. To do him justice, the semi-Puritan intended, when first brought under censure, to act the part of a Christian confessor. He went to prison and prepared for trial. From some cause, either in the defective evidence, or some flaw in the indictment, the verdict sought by the bishop was not secured. Mr. Pigg seized the opportunity before the second trial to conform, and was willing for the future to speak to the infant, and to receive the "authorized" answer to be given by the godfathers and godmothers. This compliance was not sufficient to induce his tormentors to let him go, and in his papers now before us, in his own handwriting, dated Bury, July 12, 1583, he states his grievance to Sir Francis Walsingham and to the Lords of the Privy Council. It would appear that four other ministers were in prison with him for the same offence. The hardship in his own case, Mr. Pigg said, was rendered greater by the loss of his tithes. It was harvest time, and in carting away their corn the farmers would cheat him of his share of the produce, since he could not, while in prison, look after them. But we will allow to Mr. Pigg to speak in his own words: "I am quite sure [if] I do in any thing transgress the laws of her Highness, I do nothing maliciously, obstinately, or stubbornly, nor with a contemptuous mind, but only for that *I would gladly have my conscience persuaded of the matter*, being a thing wherein I hope your honours understand divers godly and greatly learned men, that were never condemned of heresy or schism, have doubted as well as I and never yielded in it. *But I do, from my heart, detest these evil proceedings of Browne, Harrison, and their favourers, and I trust*

your lordships will *see that I am careful to conform myself*, so much as to the comfort of my conscience I may do, insomuch that Mr. Davies hath called me TURNCOAT, and mine adversaries have assailed me in other places. I told Mr. Davies that since the last assizes I had sundry times read the whole service in the order of the book, upon which condition your good lordship, at the last assizes, made promise (as I took it) to your poor orator that I was to be discharged."

After the portrait Mr. Pigg has here drawn of himself, it is unnecessary to characterise his conduct. He regretted as a serious inconvenience that he was not quite persuaded in conscience. He thought, probably, as much of his corn as of his conscience, and gained the favour of his judges by incurring the reproach of being a "turncoat." He may be considered as the representative of a large class, not only of those who suffer an inward strain within the Establishment, but also of others who sigh without, to think that they cannot enjoy the "good things" without stretching their own consciences to the same degree.

Subscription tried more severely men of greater stamina than the bucolic clergyman we have just dismissed. The struggles of conscience suffered by the sincere and the gifted who have ministered in the State Church could be described only by the pen of Dante. At intervals the disclosure is made of the burden and perplexity endured in secret for years on the part of conscientious and devout men, who, following high examples, and influenced by weighty considerations, professed in public to believe what privately they as earnestly condemned. But the full revelation has never been made. The early Puritans had a deeply-rooted and invincible objection to the institution of prelacy. Edward Deering said to Lord Burleigh: "Bear with me, though I speak the truth. The great contrariety between the gospel and it hath printed such a mortal hatred unto it as never can be reconciled!"

This was the common sentiment. It may aid us in forming a correct view of the period under consideration, to take an illustrative example of the difficulties arising from the exercise

of episcopal power. We select for this purpose the course of ROBERT WRIGHT, of Trinity College, Cambridge.

He spent fourteen years at the University, and was engaged for a considerable part of this time as tutor to the Earl of Essex. Unprepared to submit to ordination according to the Anglican form, he went to Antwerp "to see the churches from whence idolatry had been driven." We learn from the church record that THOMAS CARTWRIGHT was ordained minister in the English church, consisting of merchant adventures of that city. SECRETARY DAVISON, it appears, was an elder of the same church in 1579, and therefore more closely connected with the Puritan party than hitherto has been generally known. Under the date January 16, 1581, the following entry occurs: "Mr. Wright, arriving here, after examination, election, and ordination by the ministers, and certain of the Dutch, French, and English church, was, after the allowance of this church, by silence, without any opposition, admitted of that eldership to preach during the time, of his abode here once in the week, with determination of further entertainment of him, especially if he could frame himself to an abode in these countries. His ministry being after in controversy in England, letters were sent from the three churches aforesaid for the testifying of the lawfulness of his calling." The English merchants desired him to be minister at Vilforde (the place of Tyndale's martyrdom), where was a garrison of six hundred Scots. But Mr. Wright did not remain long in the Netherlands. He was invited by Lord Rich (brother-in-law to the Earl of Essex) to become domestic chaplain at Rochford. For two or three years previous to his visit to Antwerp, Mr. Wright had occupied himself in preaching and catechizing in the houses of the gentry in the neighbourhood. He desired now to fulfil the pastoral office, and expressed to Lord Rich the opinion that the "election of ministers ought to be by the flock or congregation." In these views his lordship concurred. No license was asked of the bishop, but Mr. Wright's testimonials from Antwerp were regarded as sufficient proof of his fitness for the work, and a little flock was collected in

Rochford Hall, including members from the houses of Mr. Butler, of Tooby, Lord Grey, and Lord St. John, of Bletsoe.

They signified their desire that Mr. Wright should take the oversight of them, and a service was held to implore the divine blessing on this new relation. JOHN GREENWOOD, B.A., of Cambridge, was associated with the pastor as assistant chaplain, and with quiet earnestness they gave themselves to the work of Christian instruction. They did not withdraw from the parish church, but held their meetings, with the approval of the resident clergyman, in the hall, usually at at eight o'clock in the evening. All the members of the household, including the noble parents, the children, and servants, were willing to answer catechetical instruction, and to unite in the devotional "exercises." We can hardly imagine a more pleasant course of Christian action, or one more productive of good.

In such services the mother of Lord Bacon expressed a lively interest. Writing, in 1584, to Lord Burleigh, she says: "For my own part, my good lord, I will not deny, but, as I may, I hear them in their public exercises, as a chief duty commanded by God; and I also confess, as one that hath found mercy, that I have profited more in the inward feeling knowledge of God's holy will, though but in a small measure, by such sincere and sound opening of the scriptures by an ordinary preaching within these seven or eight years, than I did by hearing occasional sermons at Paul's well nigh twenty years together."

Lord Rich felt that he had a right to have ministers in his house as chaplains without asking the permission of the diocesan; yet to prevent the appearance of disaffection, he went to Fulham and requested the sanction of the Bishop of London. The bishop refused the application with disdain, and said that if three commissioners had been present he would have instantly sent Lord Rich himself to prison. He insisted that Mr. Wright should appear before him. For nearly two years, however, the bishop was baffled in his attempts to secure him, and complained that, "unless he sent a

power of men to fetch him out of a nobleman's house," and "pulled him out by the ears," he "could not come by Wright."

Ultimately the angry prelate succeeded in the capture of Lord Rich and his chaplain. Both were thrown into prison. Articles were exhibited against Mr. Wright, and, according to the practice of the court, questions were submitted to him in order to find the ground of accusation from his own confessions. He admitted that in his opinion "every minister was a bishop," and that "the pastor should be chosen by the congregation." It was ascertained that John Greenwood held similar views, and that for "brevity's sake," and for other reasons, parts of the appointed service in the Book of Common Prayer were omitted by them when they used the Liturgy. This was deemed sufficient by the court to justify an unlimited imprisonment. Fruitless efforts were made to remove the scruples of Mr. Wright, and to satisfy him that the Anglican church, having taken an exact average of opinions on ecclesiastical questions, had reached the basis on which all should rest without demur. Mr. Barwick, a conforming clergyman, put the subject in this form: "God delights in mediocrity" (the just medium). "Man was put into the *midst* of Paradise. A rib was taken out of the *midst* of man. The Israelites went through the *midst* of the Red Sea and of Jordan. Samson put fire brands in the *midst* between the foxes' tails. David's men had their garments cut off by the *midst*. Christ was hanged in the *midst* between two thieves." This strange reasoning failed to satisfy Mr. Wright that the Church of England ought to be in the midst between Popery and Protestantism; and though twenty ministers of the county bore testimony to his Christian worth, he was remanded to the Gatehouse. The following joint petition was addressed by Lord Rich and himself to the Privy Council, Jan. 27, 1582:—

"The humble suit of Richard Rich, prisoner in the Fleet, and Robert Wright, prisoner in the Gatehouse, to the right Honourable the Lords of her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.

"Right Honourable,—It hath pleased Almighty God to

advance your honours for the punishment of evil doers, and defence of those that do well, and he hath likewise so directed and blessed your doings, that we have all great cause to thank him for the same, and great hope of most upright judgment in all matters that shall come before you. We do, therefore, in most humble manner, offer up our supplication unto your lordships, in the presence of the God of Heaven, whose seat you have, and not finding elsewhere the comfort which we wish, we do humbly sue that our cause might have access unto your wisdoms, and that we may hereafter be either released or condemned. It is true that we are loath, in the midst of your many and weighty causes, to trouble your lordships with the noise of our appeal. But, besides the measure of our troubles in imprisonment, and the rewards which we reap in great troubles, and disgrace for the service which we have laboured to do, both unto God and to her Majesty, in advancing the true religion which she embraceth, we understand, moreover, that grievous things are reported of us unto her Highness, and such as might justly offend her most gracious mind, if this were true, as we hope your lordships shall plainly see the contrary. And now my lords, seeing the question is not of our liberty only, which for a time we could easily want, nor of our wealth, which is less to be esteemed, but of the favour of her Majesty, who is the breath of our life, as the prophet speaketh (Lam. iv. 20), and the anointed of the Lord, under whose shadow we have rest and quietness in this land; and seeing there is no earthly thing which we so much desire, as that we may approve ourselves to be dutiful subjects, and obtain her Majesty's royal favour, we do, therefore, most humbly fly unto your lordships by the regard which you have to equity, and by the love which you have to Jesus Christ, whom we desire to serve, craving that it might please you to look into our afflicted case, and thereafter, as our doings and sufferings shall appear, so that we may, by your lordships' good and favourable means, be cleared, especially in the judgment of her Majesty.

“Upon our knees we betake your lordships to him that only

is able to keep you safely, craving pardon if we fail in any part of duty, and beseeching Almighty God to establish your seat with equity, and to preserve her Majesty, and this church and realm, by your excellent councils. Jan. 27, 1582. God save the Queen."

The prison authorities were kinder to them than the bishop. By the permission of his keeper, and the tacit consent of the Secretary of State, Mr. Wright visited his family at a time of deep distress. This manifestation of sympathy and affection on the part of the husband and of the father was an offence to Dr. Ford, who met him on the road. He reported the escape of Mr. Wright to the Bishop of London. His lordship, almost phrenzied with rage, sent for the governor of the Gatehouse and demanded the prisoner. The gaoler pleaded the distress of the family as an occasion for compassion; but all was of no avail, the bishop threatened to complain to the Queen, and to deprive him of his situation. On hearing of the trouble in which the keeper was thrown, Mr. Wright returned to the Gatehouse immediately, and addressed to the Lord Treasurer the following appeal, dated May, 1582:—

"Right Honourable,—Finding myself many ways beholden greatly unto your lordship, I want words to declare my thankful mind, not the least in that it hath pleased you to send me these notes. If your lordship shall vouchsafe also to peruse my tedious and rude answers (which is my humble suit), I must needs lift up my hand, and thank the Father of Light, as St. James speaketh, for your excellent and right noble humanity. I trust the cause itself will move your pity, and the dealings that have passed against me, flowing first from malice (as Mr. Barwick's letters will testify), and continued in like manner, as may appear. My lord of London charged me openly in the consistory, as it had been out of these notes, that I had said the Queen's Majesty *knew what we did in the Lord Rich's house*, and *thereupon* that I had slandered the Queen, *and was worthy to be seven years in prison*. I answered (only not with haughtiness), being much grieved that such a man to charge me with slander, especially of her

Majesty, whose right worthy fame and life God Almighty preserve. But they have done towards me many things of this nature. And now lastly this, which I crave your lordship's patience that I may communicate. My keeper *having used me very lovingly, as well for the liking which he hath of this religion* (a thing to be rejoiced at in a man of his calling), as also for the honourable good will which it hath pleased your lordship to declare, hath this last week (not without some secret word from the right honourable Mr. Secretary), considering the long absence from my poor wife, in her weak state, that I might see my first child (about twelve weeks old), *whatsoever should befall it, given me leave to go down secretly for one day*, which I did in the closest manner I could, going only to my father-in-law's, Mr. Butler, of Tooby, in Essex, who is much bound unto your lordship. It pleased God that Dr. Ford, advocate against me in court, should see me. He hath complained to the bishop, and he threateneth to complain to the Queen, that my keeper may have displeasure. O! my lord, I most humbly crave your lordship's favour that both I may be delivered from such unpitiful minds, and especially that your lordship will stand good lord unto my keeper, that he be not discouraged from favouring those who profess true religion, and most worthily reverence her Majesty's estate, and your honour as an excellent pillar of it, whom I pray God most happily to keep. From the Gatehouse, May 5, 1582. Your lordship's most bound,

“ROBERT WRIGHT.”

The stern and inexorable procedure of the bishop at length prevailed. The purpose of Mr. Wright to hold fast his integrity broke down. Looking at the poverty and sufferings of his wife and family he adopted the formula of submission. The bishop announced the fact to the Lord Treasurer in the following terms: “Right honourable and my singular good lord,—I have perused the two articles whereunto Mr. Wright, now a prisoner in the Gatehouse, hath willingly subscribed to the good allowance of the ministry of England and the Book of Common Prayer (as I take it), unto which both points, if he

can be content, with his friends, *to stand bound in a good round sum* that from henceforth he shall *neither commit to writing, or preach anything contrary to the same*, I, for my part, do not mislike that he shall have some favour, so that her Majesty be made privy thereunto, whom his offence doth chiefly concern; and I am given to understand that (my lord of W.) is of the same mind. Thus praying your lordship to impart these few lines to her Majesty, I commit you to the Almighty. From Fulham, this 11th of September, 1582. Your lordship's assuredly in Christ,

“JOHN LOND,”

We hear little more of Robert Wright. He spent a few years, probably in retirement, at the house of his father-in-law.

The people left as sheep without a shepherd, expressed their sense of privation and injury in petitions like the following:—

“The supplication to the Council of the inhabitants within the hundred of Rochford to the Privy Council.

“Humbly sueth unto your good honours, her Majesty's most loving and faithful subjects within the said hundred: that whereas since her Highness' reign, especially now of late, we have been instructed in the will of God, contained in His word, concerning our manifold duties towards God, and also our allegiance unto her Majesty, together with our several duties one towards another, and that by divers godly and learned preachers, whereby we have not only bettered ourselves, but also rendered more able to instruct our families in the ways of God and His true religion, by means whereof much vice hath been suppressed amongst us and much godliness increased. But now, right honourable, since that our godly and faithful preachers, by whom, as by the ordinary means appointed by God, we have and do receive manifold blessings, are some of them suspended, and some in danger to be deprived, and all greatly threatened to be taken from us, which will turn our blessings into misery, and therewith lacking sundry profitable and diligent teachers, we are encumbered with divers and sundry persons unworthy that office or name, so as we have not neither can receive little or no good at all

from them. Therefore, most humbly we entreat and beseech your honours, according to your accustomed care and good will towards the church of God, that those good and godly preachers dwelling within the said hundred, to whom we are constrained often to repair, may be freed, and at liberty to preach the gospel amongst us as they have done, to God, His glory, and our comfort, wherein we shall stand bound to pray to God for your honourable estates, long to continue to his pleasure, in much happiness, peace, welfare, and tranquillity.” Signed by a hundred persons.

The highest premiums were offered to men who were not at all troubled with convictions. The weak, the unscrupulous, and the immoral, seized with rapacious eagerness the livings vacated by the “godly and the learned.” The Anglican Church, so furnished, might have corrupted society to its core, but at this critical period witnesses for truth and honesty in religion were raised up, who for unflinching fortitude and unfaltering courage have never been surpassed. We shall find JOHN GREENWOOD, the colleague of Robert Wright, amongst the most enduring and undaunted.



THE GATEHOUSE, WESTMINSTER.

V.

BARROWE AND GREENWOOD,

OR

The Conflict for Truth.

"Careless seems the great Avenger: history's pages but record
One *death grapple in the darkness* 'twixt old systems and the Word:
Truth for ever on the scaffold, wrong for ever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the Future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

LOWELL.

IN times of general defection, and when those who should be valiant for the truth are vacillating, panic-stricken, or treacherous, God raises up an order of men whose firmness nothing can subdue, to grasp the deserted banner, and to hold it against all opposers. Such men are sustained almost as by miracle. The ordinary incentives to courage and endurance are entirely wanting. The prizes of ambition, the appreciation of sympathetic observers, the assurance of visible, though it may be remote, success—none of these things are found to afford a stimulus or to lend encouragement. Purposely they seem to be left in a state of isolation, suffering, and reproach, that would unfit them for every other service. "We are appointed unto death," says the apostle. "We both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place. We are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things. We were pressed out of

measure above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life." It is one of the strongest evidences of the truth of the gospel that witnesses for it should be found willing to accept any position, and to give their testimony under the most adverse conditions. Is it possible to imagine a cause apparently more hopeless than that of Congregationalism after the desertion of Robert Browne? To become identified with a "separated church" at that period was to stand in jeopardy every hour. Yet men were to be found to enter into the breach in single file. Whatever the depth of their suffering, they held fast their integrity. Amidst scenes of wretchedness, which might well impair their health and sicken the heart, their tone of decision never faltered.

HENRY BARROWE and JOHN GREENWOOD became leaders in the Separatist movement about the time that Robert Browne entered the School of St. Olave's, and engaged to hold no further conference with his former brethren.

Of the parentage of John Greenwood we learn nothing. Henry Barrowe, B.A., we identify as the son of Mr. Barrowe, of Shipdham, in Norfolk, an ancient visitation family, having several aristocratic branches. After leaving Corpus Christi, Cambridge (of which he was Fellow), he studied for the legal profession at Gray's Inn. Lord Bacon tells us that when a youth he was dissipated in his habits, and a frequenter of the Court. One who knew him well says that he was converted by the preaching of an earnest Puritan minister.

"Walking in London one Lord's day with one of his companions, he heard a preacher at his sermon very loud as they passed by the church. Upon which Mr. Barrowe said unto his consort, 'Let us go in and hear what this man saith that is thus earnest.' 'Tush,' saith the other; 'what! shall we go to hear a man talk?' But in he went, and sat down. And the minister was vehement in reproving sin, and sharply applied the judgments of God against the same; and, it should seem, touched him to the quick in such things as he was guilty of, so as God set it home to his soul, and began to work for his repentance and conviction thereby, for he was so

stricken as he could not be quiet, until, by conference with godly men, and further hearing of the word, with diligent reading and meditation, God brought peace to his soul and conscience, after much humiliation of heart and reformation of life. So he left the Court and retired himself to a private life, some time in the country and some time in the city, giving himself to study and reading of the scriptures and other good works very diligently; and being missed at court by his consorts and acquaintances, it was quickly hinted abroad that Barrowe was turned Puritan."

"He made a leap," Lord Bacon says, "from a vain and dissolute youth to a preciseness in the highest degree, the strangeness of which alteration made him very much spoken of."

He devoted himself to the diligent study of theology, and carefully examined every question of Christian doctrine and of church polity by the light of revelation. In these earnest enquiries he was associated with Greenwood, and a friendship was formed between them of no ordinary strength. Greenwood was the first to suffer unto bonds. For reading the scriptures to a small company of Christians at the house of Henry Martin, at St. Andrew's in the Wardrobe, in 1586, he was arrested, and warrants were issued for the apprehension of the rest, whose names we find in the papers of the Bishop of London:—Nicolas Crane, Henry White, George Snells, Edward Boyce, Ann Jackson, George Collier, Katherine Unwin, Robert Lacey, Thomas Freeman, Edith Bury, Edward Pryce, Margaret Maynard, Alice Roe, Agnes Wyman, Robert English, John Chandler, Edward Thompson, Robert Redburne, Thomas Russell, Peter Alley, and Widow *Barrowe*.

Barrowe knew his danger, but impelled by fraternal sympathy, he presented himself, with Mr. Hull, at the gate of the Clink, a prison in Southwark, near the Thames, between nine and ten o'clock, on Sabbath morning, the 19th of November, 1586, and asked to see his friend and the other Christian prisoners. Having spent about a quarter of an hour in conversation together, the gaoler came up. Mr. Shephard

rebuked Greenwood, and put Barrowe under arrest, without warrant, having only the verbal authority of the archbishop to seize him whenever he could be found.

Expostulation was in vain, the keeper ordered a boat immediately, and hastened to Lambeth to apprize the archbishop, and returned for Barrowe about one o'clock, who was taken in the charge of two pursuivants to be examined at the palace. A long colloquy ensued, too tedious to report at length. "When were you at church?" asked the archbishop. "I have answered that in another place," replied Barrowe; "it belongeth not to you." "Why, are you indicted?" enquired the archbishop. Barrowe said, "I am." "Yet it belongeth to us," rejoined the archbishop; "and I will not only meddle with you, but arraign you before me as an heretic." Barrowe answered, "You shall do no more than God will. Err I may; but an heretic I will never be." "Will you hereafter come to church?" continued his grace. "Future things are in the Lord's hands," the prisoner cautiously said; "if I do not, you have a law." At the close of the inquisition, Barrowe was remanded to the Gatehouse, and the order was given that he should be brought up again on the 27th of November. WHITGIFT, on the second examination, was assisted by the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's, and many others. Barrowe tells us that to his no small grief, just before he was called, he had heard a schoolmaster deny his Master Christ. On his appearance before the court, Barrowe declined to take an oath, or to be his own accuser. A paper was produced by the archbishop to show that the prisoner had said that the Anglican Church was antichristian and idolatrous, and that Cartwright and Beza (in taking exception to some parts of its constitution) strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. Barrowe intimates that he felt satisfied these particulars had been reported to the bishops by Mr. Thorniley, of Norwich, with whom he had a free conversation at Ware, as he rode to London. The archbishop lost his temper. In a peremptory tone he said, "Will you swear now?" Barrowe answered, "An oath is a matter of great importance, and

requireth great consideration, but I will answer you truly. Much of the matter of this bill is true, but the form is false." The coolness of the prisoner exasperated his grace the more. "Go to, sirrah; answer directly," he said. "Will you swear? Reach him a book." Barrowe, still unmoved, rejoined, "There is more cause to swear mine accuser. I will not swear." "Where is his keeper?" demanded the impatient primate. "You shall not prattle here; away with him; clap him up close, *close*, let no man come at him: I will make him tell another tale ere I have done with him."

On the 24th of March, Barrowe was brought up before a full bench of commissioners. The two Lord Chief Justices, the Master of the Rolls, the Lord Chief Baron, with a Baron of the Exchequer, assisted the archbishop and other dignitaries of the church. His grace of Canterbury had to contend with the same difficulty by which he was so ruffled in spirit on the former occasion. Barrowe still declined to take the oath. Sir Christopher Wray interposed for the protection of the prisoner in a way that might not have been expected after his letter from Bury St. Edmunds respecting Copping and Thacker. "Set down that he will not swear," said the archbishop. The Lord Chief Justice remarked, "You shall only swear to answer to the truth; if any unlawful thing be demanded of you, you need not answer." Barrowe replied, "My lord, every truth requireth not an oath; there must great regard and reverence be used in an oath, and oath for confirmation ought to be the end of all strife. My lord, if I should err, and deliver it upon mine oath for truth, it were a double sin; likewise, if I should either not know, nor remember, or not utter the whole truth, I were by such a rash oath forsworn. But by God's grace I will answer nothing but the truth."

The archbishop presented a paper of interrogatives, and required Barrowe to reply to them categorically.

Knowing the temper and aim of his inquisitors, Barrowe requested that he might put them down in writing, in order to greater exactness. The prisoner began with the series of questions, and proceeding with more fluency and force than

was quite agreeable to the primate, "he cried out for brevity," and insisted that the answers should not be given "at large." The eighth question in the course was intended to bring out the imputed sedition of the Separatist leader, and was to this effect: "Whether he thinketh the Queen's Majesty be supreme governor of the church? and whether she may make laws for the church, which are not contrary to the Word of God, or no?" The court waited for an answer which should commit the prisoner irretrievably. "I think," replied Barrowe, "the Queen's Majesty supreme governor of the whole land, and over the church also, bodies and goods; but I think that no prince, neither the whole world, neither the church itself, may make any laws for the church, other than Christ hath already left in his word; yet I think it the duty of every Christian, and principally of the prince, to enquire out and renew the laws of God, and stir up all their subjects to more diligent and careful keeping of the same." The prelates on the commission, vexed and disappointed in this guarded answer, loaded Barrowe with reproaches. The Bishop of London proposed a further question to test the prisoner:—"Whether it will be lawful for the prince to alter the judicial law of Moses, according to the state of her country and policy, or no?" Barrowe clearly apprehended the drift of the reverend examiner, and replied with characteristic care and precision, "I ought to be wise in sobriety, and not to answer more than I know. Great doubt and controversy hath been about this question a long time, but for my part, I cannot see that any more of the judicial law was or can be abrogated by any mortal man or country, upon what occasion soever, than belonged to the ceremonial law and worship of the temple, for which we have received other laws and worship in Christ's Testament; but that the judgments due, and set down by God for the transgression of the moral law, cannot be changed or altered, without injury to the moral law, and God Himself. Yet this, as all my other answers by protestation, that if any man can better instruct me therein by the Word of God, I am always ready to change my mind." The bishops would

not receive the answer, and ordered it to be erased. Sir Christopher Wray, the Lord Chief Justice, said the prisoner had spoken well, and that if the respondent were in doubt, his answer ought not to be taken.

In his own report of the examination, Barrowe writes: "Now was I dismissed, and committed again to my keeper, with strait charge that no man might speak to me. During this time others of my brethren were examined, which being done, I was called for in unto them, when Canterbury showed me the statute of Supremacy, and asked me if I could take an oath according to the same. I said in that form I could not, neither could I swear to such successors as I knew not; but to her Majesty, I acknowledged her authority, as I had expressed in my article, and protested my life in defence of her person, prerogative, and dignity, loyally, against all foreign and domestical enemies, whether spiritual or temporal. The archbishop said that the Papists made a better and more dutiful oath than this. I said it was not true; they denied not, neither defied the Pope, but I was ready to give and perform as much unto my prince as any true subject ought to do. He asked me again, whether the church of Christ, if the prince deny or refuse to correct abuses, may, without staying for the prince, reform them? I said, that it might and ought, though all the princes in the world should prohibit the same upon pain of death."

"Upon the 18th day of the third month," Barrowe says, "I was sent for in all post haste, by one Ragland, a gentleman of the Lord Chancellor's, to his lordship's chamber, at the court at Whitehall, where being arrived, *I found in a withdrawing chamber twelve of the brethren*, among a great number of other attendants, *with whom I could not have any one word*; but after that Ragland had signified my coming, I was forthwith sent for into that chamber, where sat at the Board, the Archbishop in his pontificalibus, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer [Burleigh], the Lord Buckhurst, the Bishop of London in his pontificalibus: at the lower end of the chamber stood Dr. Some, Justice Young, and others."

Here is a scene for a fresco painting. We shall not attend to the proceedings further than to listen to the colloquy between Barrowe and Lord Burleigh.

Barrowe, at the command of the court, knelt down at the table, and the following conversation arose between the two remarkable men, the Separatist confessor and the Prime Minister of Queen Elizabeth :—

Burleigh. “Why are you in prison, Barrowe?”

Barrowe. “I am in prison, my lord, upon the statute made for recusants.”

Burleigh. “Why will you not go to church?”

Barrowe. “My whole desire is to come to the church of God.”

Burleigh. “Thou art a fantastical fellow, I see; but why not to our churches?”

Barrowe. “My lord, the causes are great and many; it were too long to show them in particular; but briefly, my lord, I cannot come to your church, because all the profane and wicked of the land are received into the body of your church; 2. You have a false and antichristian ministry set over your church; 3. Neither worship you God aright, but after an idolatrous and superstitious manner; 4. And your church is not governed by Christ’s Testament, but by the Romish courts and canons.”

Burleigh. “Here is matter enough indeed: I perceive thou takest delight to be an author of this new religion.”

The Lord Chancellor, with unaffected astonishment, said he never heard such stuff before in all his life.

The examination became exciting to all parties; bishops and judges, as well as the undefended prisoner, spoke in turn and out of turn under strong feeling. After an irregular discussion on several points, the Lord Treasurer, taking up a paper of Dr. Some’s questions, read to the following effect:—
“The prisoner holds that it is unlawful to enact a law that the ministers shall live by tithes, or the people pay them.”
Turning to Barrowe, his lordship resumed the conversation:—

Burleigh. “Do you hold tithes to be unlawful?”

Barrowe. "My lord, they are abrogated and unlawful."

Burleigh. "Why, thou wouldest have the minister live of somewhat; whereof should he live?"

Barrowe. "Ex pura eleemosyna—of clear alms, as Christ in his Testament hath ordained, and as he and his apostles."

Burleigh. "But how if the people will not give?"

Barrowe. "Such are not the people of God."

Burleigh. "But what shall the ministers do in the mean time?"

Barrowe. "Not stand a minister to such, neither take the goods of the profane."

Burleigh. "Where canst thou show me in scriptures that the ministers ought not to live upon tithes?"

Barrowe took the Bible, and turned to Heb. vii. 12, Gal. vi. 6, to show in the one where tithes are abrogated, in the other that another provision is made for them. This led to a warm logomachy, in which the prelates again waxed angry. The Bishop of London said, "What makest thou a priest?" Barrowe replied, "Him that doth offer sacrifices; for so it is written everywhere in the law." The dispute now became personal. The Lord Chancellor pointed to the Archbishop and to the Bishop of London as *tableaux vivant*, and asked the prisoner if he knew them. "Yes, my lord," said Barrowe, "I have cause to know them." The Lord Chancellor continued, "But what, is not this the Bishop of London?" "I know him for no bishop, my lord," said the unflinching prisoner. "What is he then?" enquired the Lord Chancellor. "His name is Aylmer, my lord," replied Barrowe. "What is this man?" (pointing to Canterbury) enquired the Chancellor. In his account of the scene, Barrowe says, "the Lord gave me the spirit of boldness, so that I answered, 'He is a monster, a miserable compound, I know not what to make of him; he is neither ecclesiastical nor civil—even that second beast spoken of in the Revelation.' The Lord Treasurer said, 'Where is that place? Show it.' So I turned to the thirteenth chapter, and began at the eleventh verse, and read a little. Then I turned to 2 Thess. ii., but the 'beast'

arose for anger, gnashing his teeth, and said, 'Will you suffer him my lords?' So I was plucked up by the warden's man from my knees and carried away. As I was departing, I desired the Lord Treasurer that I might have the liberty of the air, but had no answer; and I prayed the Lord to bless their honours. So I was led forth by *another way than I came in, that I might not see the brethren, nor they me.*"

Greenwood was called up for a similar examination, and with the same result. Both prisoners were remanded to close confinement, and charge was given to intercept all communication between them and their friends. Yet in their long imprisonment they found means to write several treatises in exposition and in defence of their principles. These works were prepared of course under great disadvantages. "If there be found," they say, in one of their writings, "or rather abound, any imperfect or redundant sentences, let these be imputed partly to the inconvenience of the place, the continual tossings and turmoils, searches and riflings, and no peace or means given us either to write or revise what we had written."

Their opponents had, on the contrary, every kind of aid and encouragement. University men knew that there was no more certain course to promotion and emolument than to traduce the Separatists. The Puritan leaders looked to this occupation as the best means for securing favour.

Against these formidable antagonists Barrowe and Greenwood, however, took up an entrenched position, from which they were never fairly dislodged. They maintained that the "Antichrist" of the Apocalypse was not confined to the Church of Rome. "As is the mother," they said, "so is the daughter." The Anglican Church, claiming descent from the Church of Rome, recognising as valid both its ordination and the ordinance of baptism, in their judgment, was involved in the doom of Antichrist. They disclaimed all right to judge their fellow men in matters of conscience. They admitted that within the Establishment many were sincere Christians. Barrowe says explicitly, "I willingly confess, that many, both

of the teachers and also of the professors within these parish assemblies, have so embraced this truth of doctrine, established and professed in this land, as the Lord of His infinite goodness hath granted them the favour to show outwardly many tokens, whereby (in regard of the Lord's election) I profess before men and angels that I judge them to be members of that body whereof the Son of God Christ Jesus is the Head. Only herein the Lord be merciful unto them (as to myself in regard of my sins), that they are not under that outward form of government which Christ hath left." As a few trees in a tangled wilderness do not make an orchard—as sheep wandering on the mountains are not like a flock enclosed within the fold—so Christian people in the mixed multitude, comprising the entire population of a country, are not a church of Christ.

If so, even admitting that the sovereign might protect and aid a true church, the Elizabethan Establishment had no valid title to such regal patronage. The resumption of its revenues, however sacrilegious in their estimation, would be equally warranted with the suppression of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. With respect to the vested interests of patrons, Barrowe contended that they were not entitled to consideration. "The office of patrons is greatly prejudicial and contrary unto the liberty and order of the church, for Christ hath appointed that every particular church, all the members whereof gathered together, as well learned as other, with one accord, should make choice of their ministry after due proof, according to the rules prescribed (Acts vi. 2, 5, and xiv. 23; Titus i. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 10), which choice cannot be made or order kept when one man (were he never so wise) taketh away the power and duty of the whole church to make the choice, how much less when the patron that owneth the advowson is many times a stranger to the priest and people, ignorant and unable to judge of the gifts, fitness, life of the person chosen and presented. The office of these patrons being found thus contrary to the Word of God, thus prejudicial and pernicious to the church, ought also by the prince to

be abolished; which office being taken away, we see not how any man can challenge the revenues belonging."

The fact that any institution or practice in the church was "contrary to the Word of God," Barrowe regarded as a reason quite sufficient for its abolition. "The Word of God," he says, "is the archetype and ground-work of all states, degrees, actions, both ecclesiastical and civil, whereunto they must be framed, whereby they shall be judged, no other thing standing before the face of that great judge than His own revealed will in His word: whatsoever there is agreeable unto the Word of God is agreeable unto the state, and whatsoever is contrary unto the Word of God is contrary unto the state."

The temporising and inconsistent course of the Puritans who hankered after the good things of the Establishment, met with the sternest rebuke of the Separatists. Barrowe mercilessly assailed the outworks raised for their defence by the Genevan reformer. "Where a Christian prince is," Calvin says (*Instit. lib. iv. sec. 9*), "who maintaineth the gospel, and the whole land or estate, not resisting this commandment, reverenceth the word and sacraments, these, *the whole multitude* of such a land or state, are without doubt to be esteemed and judged a *true church*."

In opposition to this view, Barrowe says, "We know that no prince or mortal man can make any a member of the church; they may, by their godly government, greatly help and further the church, greatly comfort the faithful, and advance the gospel. But to choose or refuse, to call or harden,—that the eternal and almighty ruler of heaven and earth keepeth in His own hands, and giveth not this power unto any other.

"The prince himself entereth by the same door of faith unto the church, and is bound to the strict observation and obedience of God's laws in his calling, as well as any other, and is for any transgression thereof liable and subject to the censures and judgments of Christ in his church, which are without partiality or respect of persons; which censures and judgments, if the prince contemn, he contemneth them against

his own soul, and is thereupon, by the same power of Christ, to be disfranchised out of the church, and to be delivered unto Satan as well as any other offender. Now though by this sin he loseth his right to be a Christian, or member of the church, yet loseth he not his right to be a king or magistrate, and is so to be held of all faithful Christians which are his subjects."

Another refinement of Calvin's, on which the Puritans relied, was to this effect: "By the civil law the conscience is not bound but the outward action only." "If, he mean," Barrowe replies, "that the conscience is not subject to the civil magistrate, but the body only, he saith true. For no man, no not the whole church, can enter into God's seat to search and judge the conscience, the inward affections of the breast. But if Mr. Calvin mean (as his words and scope intend) that the conscience is not charged with the law of the outward court, but with the outward action only, then surely he greatly erred; for this doctrine is most dangerous and false, as discharging the conscience from the whole second table, unto which it as much bound, as unto the first. Neither can we keep or please God in the first, that walk not with a good conscience towards all men in the second. Our prayers are abominable that are offered with hands full of blood, or with our hearts abounding with lusts, or set upon the world..... A strange doctrine it is to sever the conscience and the law, the conscience and the outward action; they may as well here, whilst we live, sever the body and the soul, which though they are distinct things, yet can they not be here separate."

It disturbed the mind of Barrowe exceedingly that the evangelical clergy should try to retain their position in the Anglican Church at the expense of consistency, trusting mainly to the reasonings of the reformers. Logically, they could only justify their connection with the Church of England by recognizing the Church of Rome. "If," says Barrowe, "the Church of Rome be no true church, then the ministers made therein are no true ministers; for by Mr. Penry's (and that a true) position, where there is no church, there is no calling; but all the ministers of the Church of England were

made either in the Church of Rome, and that within memory, yea, within half the age of a man, therefore we may, by his own reason, conclude all this to be Romish and Antichristian. If the baptism of the Church of Rome were not true baptism, then were all the people upon the change of that religion unbaptized. If Mr. Penry provide not better stuff for his own defence, I can tell him this, that both he and his companions must become Brownists, as, to the dishonour of Christ, they term us."

JOHN PENRY, at this time identified with the Puritans, was anxious to secure the aid of Parliament, and the sanction of Queen Elizabeth, for the speedy evangelization of Wales.

Barrowe rebuked this trust in princes. "You seek," he says, "to bring in Christ in the arm of flesh, and not by the power of His word, and virtue of His Spirit, into the hearts and consciences of men, because indeed you dare not publish that truth you know, and practise in a good conscience, enduring cheerfully with patience whatsoever may be inflicted upon you for the same by this evil generation; whereas now you dare neither believe any more of God's truth, than either is already publicly received, or else confirmed by some of your authentic authors, Mr. Calvin, Mr. Beza, D. Fulke; thus holding and dissembling the faith of Christ in respect of persons, times, and I wot not what policies, as though the truth of God were not always in season, always necessary, always authentic. We poor Christians are so far from rejoicing to see you thus ensnared and foiled, that we even grieve and blush for shame that so glorious a cause should be so evil handled of you. Why could not the sacred scriptures have given light to the deciding this doubt and undoing this knot, but that the one side must run to Mr. Calvin, and he must be *instar mille*, the other to D. Fulke?"

Barrowe and Greenwood, though in bonds, were conscious of a freedom to which the servile Puritan leaders, who accepted the negative favour of an ignominious silence without molestation, were strangers.

"A very great and good company of the noble, the rich,

the learned," Barrowe says, "will all be ready upon the first blush of fair weather, as soon as ever it holdeth up over our head, and these storms and clouds are blown away, to go with them on this journey whither they are travelling, for thither also are they bent; and as soon as ever God shall incline the prince's heart, then they will all forsake Antichrist and go unto Christ. In the mean time they have all, with one consent, determined not to guide forward one step.

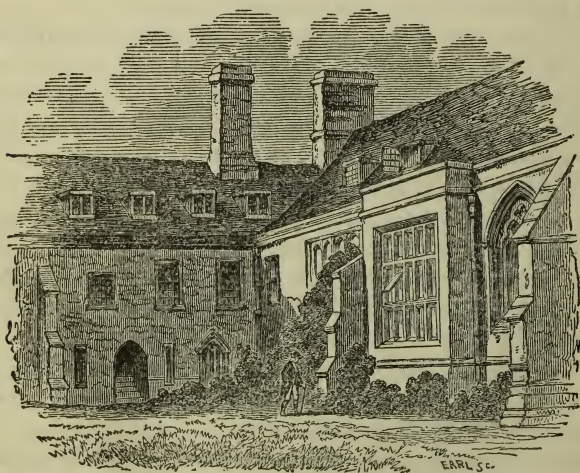
"All these that go before them in the way, and will not stay for this good company, such they say mar all their course, and hinder the discipline they seek; and therefore they essay all means to turn them out of the way, which, if it will not be, then they denounce and proclaim them as most bitter enemies, Brownists, schismatics, proud and ignorant persons, disobedient to magistrates, whom they in their pulpits stir up to send out their horsemen and chariots after them, to bring them back again into Egypt, and to hold their bodies in most noisome, vile, and strait prisons, except they will come to these fowlers into their high places.

"For these good men would not have Christ brought in the base manner by faith and repentance, leaving all such things as are contrary to His will, and seeking to do the things that He hath commanded, whosoever say nay to it, and whatsoever it cost, whether confiscation or death, bearing his cross in all patient and humble manner with cheerfulness and joy. Fie, this is all too base; they would bring Him in with sound of trumpet, by an army and strength, by act of parliament, by consent of all estates of the realm, prince, nobles, priests, and people; and that unto these famous synagogues and high places, gorgeously decked for His majesty, and not in this abject manner to run Him into upper chambers, holes in woods, prisons, &c., with a few unlearned wretches, and that not with the magistrate's leave and good will."

It was by the MORAL HONESTY of such men as Barrowe and Greenwood that the corruption found at that period in high places did not eat away the very core of society. They had convictions, and holding them firmly they gave to them full

and distinct expression. When the time comes in which it will be seen that commercial as well as political integrity must be determined by the thorough sincerity of religious profession, the names of these early confessors of English Congregationalism will be much better known. Honest and honourable men will feel it to be a duty to point to their noble example.

“Wherever,” says Vinet, “dissimulation on the subject of religion has become the rule, although it may not in every instance immediately occasion the entire falling away of the moral man, *it insensibly produces in the mass of society a vast moral decay, the just retribution for the abandonment of a first principle.* Sincerity and candour, in the profession of religious belief, are pledges of the moral health of the community; so long as profession is honoured, all moral convictions are in safety; but *with the dissimulation of religious opinions come, in rapid succession, doctrinal and practical indifference, a preference given to the expedient over right, and in the end complete subversion of all morality.*”



OLD HALL, CORPUS CHRISTI. THE COLLEGE OF BARROWE.

VI.

SEPARATISTS IN PRISON,

AND

Their Demand for Justice.

“ Some, while they live, are rank’d as mad,
And are placed in the cold world’s ban,
For sending their bright, far-seeing souls
Three centuries in the van.
They toil in penury and grief
Unknown—if not maligned ;
Forlorn, forlorn, bearing the scorn
Of the meanest of mankind.
But truth will conquer at the last,
For round and round we run,
And ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.”

MACKAY.

THE safeguard of English liberties is not to be found in the strength of our armies, nor in the provisions of the constitution alone, but in the moral force that can be invoked against organized oppression at any hour, and before which no political combination for purposes of tyranny can stand. The precedents which have contributed to its preponderating influence are not so much in the decision of courts as in the undying words of the injured and down-trodden, that quickened within the breast of the people an instructive hatred of wrong, and the determination to watch incessantly against its recurrence. Amongst the original papers of Barrowe and his companions, we find memorials which ought to be universally known, and

to be preserved to the remotest period, as part of the testimony so essential to keep alive the spirit of freedom.

On the 13th of March, 1588, they prepared the following address to the QUEEN :—

“The Lord of heaven and earth, that hath so wonderfully hitherto preserved and established your Majesty in your earthly kingdom, that you should now advance His spiritual kingdom before all nations of the earth, that God whom you have such cause to love, honour, and serve, incline your royal heart, which hath ever been pitifully affected, even towards your greatest enemies, to some Christian consideration and speedy redress of the outrageous wrong and most extreme injuries wherewith sundry of your most faithful and true hearted subjects have been a long time, and are at this present, especially oppressed in all places by the bishops of this land, but principally by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, for the true profession and practice of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (we are always ready to appear before God and men if we might be but produced to any Christian and equal trial), which gospel though your Majesty have most graciously published to the eyes and ears of all men, through all places of your kingdom, inhibiting none but inviting all to the faithful obedience and sincere practice thereof, yet the professed enemies of all righteousness will not only not enter themselves into the kingdom of God, but forbid others that would; with deadly hatred and extreme rage, persecuting all those that upon conscience toward God and care of their own salvation, in humble and peaceable manner seek for reformation for these antichristian burdens and popish abominations, which the *bishops, for the maintenance of their proud estate, with a strong hand imposed upon the consciences of men*, contrary to the express rule and truth of the gospel, daily spoiling, vexing, and locking them up close prisoners in the most unwholesome and vile prisons, and there detaining them, without bringing them to their answer until the Lord by death put an end to their miseries. Some they have haled from their honest labours in their trades, and cast

them laden hands and feet, with bolts and fetters of iron, into cold and noisome prisons, close prisoners. Some they have cast into the Little Ease. Some they have put into the mill, causing them to be beaten with cudgels in their prisons. Others in the night time they have apprehended and drawn out of their houses, yea, out of their beds, shutting them up close prisoners, separating them most unjustly from their wives, children, and families, callings, trades, labours, to their utter undoing, and to the famishment of their poor wives and children. All this barbarous havoc they make without regard of age, sex, estate, or degree, as may appear by the lamentable estate of those that remain, and by the deaths of others by them murdered in the prisons, whose blood crieth out from under the altar. Some of us have been kept prisoners these nineteen months, for hearing the scripture read unto us in one of our houses, upon a Lord's day morning, in all godly and peaceable manner; neither have we been in all this time ever produced to our answer, or had either error or crime objected against us. Others of us, after they have been kept close prisoners half a year, without any cause or pretence of cause as yet known, unless for refusing to take an oath ministered by them *ex officio*, they have at length brought forth to *Newgate sessions*, there indicted, condemned, and imprisoned upon the statute of recusancy made for the papists, the ancient enemies of Christ, your royal person, and the realm, notwithstanding that we refused not any part of the Word of God, neither to be truly instructed in the same, most heartily detesting all Romish trumperies, and all heresies whatever; being always ready, and still most humbly desiring, to render an account of that faith that is in us, doing or leaving undone nothing for which we have not express warrant in the Word of God. Yet have we not (lying in prisons upon execution of the great fines unto your Majesty) enjoyed that benefit of the liberty of the house which the law alloweth, and they afford to the most dangerous and pestilent papists in that behalf, but have been again shut up close prisoners these thirteen weeks, to the great impairment of our health, and hazard of

our lives, and so still remaineth, no cause as yet showed thereof; neither yet here hath their malice ceased, but during this time of our close imprisonment, when we might neither speak nor write for ourselves, have they in their pulpits published and denounced against us, railing and most falsely slandering us, even in your Majesty's presence, accusing us of many dangerous errors and heinous crimes, whereof yet unto our faces they never durst produce any [evidence], seeking hereby to bring us into your Majesty's indignation, and to draw out your sword of justice (which is given for the defence of the innocent) against innocence, and so bring that guiltless blood which they have shed, upon your Majesty and the whole land, by drawing you into their quarrel which they have against Christ Jesus, and all that truly profess His name, as may more appear when their dealing with the faithful servants of God shall be more looked into. But we hope that God which hath hitherto kept your Majesty will also deliver you from these evil men, and their evil ways; yea, and put into your royal heart to revoke all their cruel decrees against the saints of God, in whose name we most humbly beseech you Majesty *to cause us and our accusers to be brought forth either before your Highness or some of your honourable and trusty council*, before whom, if we be found to have committed anything either worthy of bonds, or this handling, we desire no mercy, but to the example and terror of others to receive condign punishment to our death; but if we be found innocent, then to be freed from the cruelty of these men, and to be received into your royal and gracious protection, for which cause God hath even placed you in this high throne of dignity. In the meanwhile and whilst we live we shall not cease to solicit the Lord our God for the continuance and increase of all His blessings upon you in this life, and the full fruition of them in the world to come, there without impeachment of any enemies to reign with Him for ever in His heavenly kingdom. Amen. Amen."

It is important to mark the strain of devoted loyalty in this address, because, subsequently, the lives of Barrowe and Greenwood were sacrificed on the pretence of sedition, and

to the present day writers of certain predilections still speak of them as guilty of treason.

There is no reason to infer that this importunate appeal received the slightest recognition. *John Sparrow* and Christopher Bowman, with ten other brethren, presented the petition to the Queen in person on the 15th of March, 1588, and were committed to prison for the act by the Privy Council.*

Denied redress from the sovereign, the prisoners, though distributed in the various gaols in London, found opportunity to unite in the subjoined memorial to Lord Burleigh, 1588-9:—

“The humble petition of many poor Christians, imprisoned by the bishops in sundry prisons in and about London, to the Lord Treasurer.

“We humbly beseech your honour, either to grant us a speedy trial together, or some free Christian conference, or else in the meanwhile, that we may be bailed according to law, or else put into Bridewell, or some other convenient place, *where we may be together for our mutual help and comfort*; or if your honour will not yourself alone grant this our request, that then it may please you to be a mean for our speedy relief, unto the rest of her Majesty’s most honourable Privy Council.

“The Almighty God that hath preserved your lordship unto these honourable years in so high service to our sovereign prince, and to the unspeakable comfort of this whole land, give your honourable heart so tender compassion and careful consideration in equity of the poor afflicted servants of Christ, and that (before the Lord plead against this land for Abel’s innocent blood that is shed in the several prisons) your honour may open your mouth for the dumb in the cause of the children of [devoted to] destruction, that you may open your mouth and judge righteously, and judge the cause of the afflicted, as the people of Israel when they went to war first made peace with God, and removed all occasion whereby his wrath might be incensed, lest He should fight against them in battle; for if this suppression of the truth, and oppression of Christ

* Pp. 10 and 14.

in His members, contrary to all law and justice, be without restraint prosecuted by the enemy in the land, then not only the persecuted shall daily cry from under the altar for redress, but God's wrath be so kindled for the shedding the innocent blood of men, even the blood of His own servants (of whom He has said, 'Touch not mine anointed'), that if Noah, Daniel, and Job, should pray for this people, yet should they not deliver them.

"May it please then your lordship to understand, that we her Majesty's loyal, dutiful, and true-hearted subjects, to the number of three score persons and upwards, have, contrary to all law and equity, been imprisoned, separated from our trades, wives, children, and families; yea, shut up close prisoners from all comfort, many of us the space of *two years and a half*, upon the bishop's sole commandment, *in great penury and noisomeness of the prisons*; many ending their lives never called to trial; *some haled forth to the sessions*; *some cast in irons and dungeons*; *some in hunger and famine*; *all of us debarred from any lawful audience before our honourable governors and magistrates, and from all benefit and help of the laws*; *daily defamed and falsely accused by published pamphlets, by private suggestions, open preaching, slanders, and accusations of heresy, sedition, schism, and what not*. *And above all, which most utterly toucheth our salvation, they keep us from all spiritual comfort, and edifying by doctrine, prayer, or mutual conference.*

"Seeing, *for our conscience only*, we are deprived of all comfort, we most humbly beseech your good lordship, that some more mitigate and peaceable course might be taken therein, that some free and Christian conference, publicly or privately, before your honour, or before whom it would please you (*where our adversaries may not be our judges*), might be had; that our case, with the reason and proof on both sides, might be recorded by indifferent notaries and faithful witnesses; *and if anything be found in us worthy of death or bonds, let us be made an example to all posterity*; if not, we entreat for some compassion to be shown in equity according to law for our relief; and that in the meantime we *may be bailed to do her Majesty*

service, walk in our callings, to provide things needful for ourselves, our poor wives, disconsolate children and families lying upon us, or else that we may be prisoners together in Bridewell, or any other convenient place at your honour's appointment, where we might provide such relief by our diligence and labours as might preserve life to the comfort of our souls and bodies." Signed by fifty-nine persons in the Gatehouse, Fleet, Newgate, Bridewell, Clink, White Lion, Wood Street Counter, and Poultry Counter.

Ten of their number had died: John Chandler, George Dinghtre, Richard Jackson, Widow Maynard, Widow Rowe, Nicolas Crane, Thomas Stephens, Henry Thompson, Jerome Studley, and John Pardy.

Independently of this general appeal from their brethren and companions in suffering, Barrowe and Greenwood sent to Lord Burleigh a manuscript treatise, containing the most frank and unequivocal declaration of their principles, accompanied with a joint address to this effect:—

"Right Honourable,—We have, as our frail memories and small measures of knowledge would suffer, in the midst of many encumbrances in this our miserable imprisonment, drawn an imperfect discourse of such weighty causes as we were desirous, when God should call us thereunto, to make known *unto her Majesty, or some of her honourable council.* And now, by your honour's desert and gracious allowance occasioned, we most gladly relate and present the same to *your good lordship only*, as to one whose rare wisdom we know most able to discern, and who careth to preserve and defend the innocent according to right. Wherefore we most willingly put this weighty cause and our woful lives in your hand, to be preserved to some equal trial from our enemies' rage, like to be increased hereupon, in that *it so nearly toucheth their estimation and worldly prosperity.* And howsoever these *high causes of God* (which have not been hitherto looked into since the first defection from the sincere practice of the gospel in the primitive church) may seem strange unto your honour at the first view, especially if they be weighed with human reason,

yet being examined by that archetype and true pattern of Christ's Testament, we doubt not but you honour shall see with us how far the present state is swerved from the inviolable order prescribed; especially if your honour vouchsafe but to look into the office, entrance, and ministration of this ministry, you shall soon see it (as some of their own writers confess and *none can deny*) *to be received by succession from the Pope*, who, though he were expelled with many of his enormities out of this land by her Majesty's royal progenitor, yet remained these offices and laws, courts worship, &c., untaken or suppressed, notwithstanding that the Lord of Hosts had said (Jer. li. 26), they shall not take a stone of Babel for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, for it shall be desolate for ever; so that it is impossible Antichrist's ministry should build up or serve in the true Church of Christ, Himself having instituted and ordained another ministry in His Testament, and forbidden all such as have not their warrant from thence. It is then our purpose, right honourable, to make plain in our treatise, that when the Pope was expelled, his ministry and orders, which came out of the bottomless pit, were still reserved and set up instead of the ministry of Christ, and so still remain, which their ministry, being thus found antichristian, must by the prince be abolished and suppressed, that God's wrath be not kindled against the whole land, for the wilful violating and defacing of God's ordinances, bowing down unto, endowing and maintaining such bitter plants of Antichrist's grafting; neither will it suffice to say, the martyrs in Queen Mary's days stood in these offices in King Edward's days; seeing it were great impiety to justify any iniquity by the example of frail man (no man living without error). For that were to set the martyrs of Christ against Christ, and either to build our faith wholly upon men, and cast aside the Testament, or else to rip up the ignorances of men to maintain some sin in ourselves, even presumptuously to tempt God, to continue obstinate in known sin, which, far be it from us, seeing the Spirit of God teacheth us that neither martyr nor angel from heaven can justify anything Christ in His Word condemneth, nor may

withdraw us from the evident rules in Christ's Testament from any jot thereof, much less from the pure and holy ordinances and government of Christ in His church. Shall then this famous land, right honourable, lie still in the known dregs of popery under God's wrath for the same? Shall a few pompous prelates, for their own private lucre, pride, and idleness, withhold the practice of Christ's Testament, and mislead the whole land to judgment? Shall her Majesty's most loyal subjects be persecuted and miserably made away in prisons, for not bowing down to these confessed abominations? Shall her Majesty, and her most honourable Council, be thus guilty of innocent blood through the bishop's evil dealings? God forbid. Especially the Lord alluring her Majesty and the council, both with spiritual promises and heaps of earthly treasures (with much peace and happiness to the whole land), without injury to, or just complaint of any of her subjects, so highly shall they be contented, so that if this *be not now received* (being thus by God's providence put into your hands), *it will be received in the age to come*; whatsoever come of our miserable bodies, it will be looked upon. It is God's word which hath now discovered it, which goeth not out in vain, nor returneth fruitless, but surely effecteth the will of God. If anything shall be objected against the points we have written, we beseech your honour their reasons may be set down and discussed, either by public conference, under notary, or in private before your honour, with whom honour shall think meet, or in writing; yea, if your honour shall be willing to hear any of the points discussed by the scriptures, your lordship may procure any of the learned whom yet your honour may best trust in such business, and call us to trial in your own audience, without making any acquainted with the end of the question, lest they deal partially, and to seek to trouble and not to edify, as their custom is. In the meantime, by reason of our long close imprisonment, we having had no exercise to our bodies, air, or other things needful even for the preserving of life, this three years in effect, our bodies weak, and memories impaired, and greatly

broken, as also in no small peril to be indirectly hastened to our grave by our adversaries in this prison, as they have heretofore endeavoured, most humbly beseech your honour *we may be placed at some honest man's house*, where your honour please to appoint, or where we can provide, putting in sufficient bond for our appearance when and where we shall be called to any lawful trial. Thus beseeching Almighty God, by His own Holy Spirit, to direct your lordship in these weighty affairs—yea, to draw forth your honourable years in health, safety, and prosperity, to your own endless comfort and good of the whole land, craving pardon for our boldness, and giving most humble thanks for your honourable compassion already showed, we, in all due reverence, take our leave, until we further understand your honour's will. From the Fleet, this 13th of this 9th month.

“Your honour's most humbly in the Lord to command,

“JOHN GREENWOOD.

“HENRY BARROWE.”

Still there was no response. Sickness and want reduced one after another to the verge of the grave, and silently all might have perished without public cognizance or any form of legal enquiry. No advocate would undertake to plead their cause. They renewed their application to the Privy Council in terms of such force and moral sublimity, that once known to the thoughtful and earnest friends of freedom they must be had in perpetual remembrance:—

“Right Honourable,—Though our extreme calamities, by sickness, wants, griefs, and troubles, in noisome and irksome prison, would urge us to a large discourse, yet we acknowledge your manifold affairs in the commonwealth enjoin us to brevity. Therefore we most humbly beseech your honours at this time, to read and consider of a very short declaration of our loyalty, two brief answers to certain rumours, and one petition concerning our present state. And as your honours find our petition reasonable, our answers Christian, and our loyalty entire to our sovereign prince, so we entreat you, for God's

sake, to be a means to release us, especially those who are known to be in extreme distress by sickness and want.

“A brief declaration of our faith and loyalty.

“1. We fully acknowledge our duty to obey and practise within our calling the laws of Christ Jesus, our heavenly king, in and above all things, worshipping Him according to the rules of Christ’s Testament, because the same are perpetual, immutable, most holy, just, and wise, only thought meet, in His wisdom, for all times, places, and persons; and, therefore, upon pain of damnation, to be embraced of all men.

“2. We fully acknowledge her Majesty’s title to the crown by right of descent from the undoubted kings of this realm, her most royal progenitors.

“3. We fully acknowledge her Majesty’s supreme government in magistracy over all persons and causes within her Highness’s dominions, within the church and without.

“4. We fully acknowledge our duties to pray for the preservation of her royal person, and that they are negligent who forget this duty, that they are not Christ’s who condemn it, and that they are traitors who deny it.

“5. We fully acknowledge our duties to yield the half or whole of all our lands and goods towards the maintenance of her princely estate, or other benefit of our country, whether by way of benevolence, subsidies, taxings, or such like, without grudging, being by due order enacted.

“6. We fully acknowledge our duties to obey the laws or statutes of this land, so far forth as they are agreeable to Christ’s, and patiently to suffer for not obeying those which we either rightly take, or, as men may err, do mistake to be contrary to his, without the thought of making new, or altering old ones, how unequal soever they are, which thing no subject, we say, hath any warrant to do.

“7. We fully acknowledge our duties to obey all Christians, civil officers, or the heathen, if we were under their government, from the prince on the throne to the meanest office, as constable or any other.

“8. We fully acknowledge our duties to be ready at all times with our bodies, to be employed, in peace or war, at home or abroad, in any service for God’s glory, and our Queen and country’s safety.

“9. We fully acknowledge our duties to yield our members and lives to what prison, punishment, or death soever, whether justly or wrongfully inflicted, rather than resist the higher powers.

“10. We fully acknowledge our duties to do good to all men as becometh Christians. Therefore, touching our whole country, even the most ignorant, wilful, obstinate, and wicked, thus we say—whatsoever knowledge, good name, health, wealth, joy in this world, or in the world to come, we wish ourselves, let us never enjoy any of these, if we wish not the same to as many of them who fear God, love their prince and country, and obey her Majesty and her laws in such manner as we have described. Unto the rest we pray and wish for repentance and amendment of life.

“The answer to two rumours against us.

“The rumour goeth, that we differ from all the land in some opinions, gainsaying not only the bishops and whole clergy, but magistrates and the whole land; and therefore no prison is too vile, nor any punishment too grievous or too long for us.

“Right Honourable,—The magistrates we reverence in thought, word, and deed. For the other this consequence is very hard and unmerciful. Blessed be God, who hath not made the multitude our judges, nor our prince a child. *We dissent, indeed, from all our nation in some doctrines concerning the true worship, offices, officers, and government of God in His church; but seeing we have thus laid open our faith and loyalty to God, our prince, and our country, is there no more favour and mercy due unto us than to languish away in prisons without bail or trial, which kind of persecution is more grievous than death itself?* The ancient fathers have much differed in their judgment. The most learned and famous men in England differ in judgment. But no heresy nor schism is proved. Where love and loyalty remain, where wickedness is rather hated

and reprov'd than committed, God forbid that more grievous punishment should be inflicted upon such a people than upon any manner of malefactors.

“But the rumour goeth, that we are heretics and schismatics, holding most ungodly opinions.

“Right Honourable, this rumour is false. In error it may be we are, for we confess ourselves to be sinful men; yea, daily we sin, and what man, whether you look to the first man, Adam, or to the patriarchs, prophets, or apostles, or to the most learned and holy of the former, later, or present age—what man, say we, except the man Christ, but hath erred and may err? Therefore, *as men, we also may fail in judgment. But heretics or schismatics none can prove us. If they could, it were their fault to suffer us so many years to remain in so many places of the realm unconvinced*, especially as we continually desire an equal trial. For which cause we pine away with astonishment and grief that no more pitiful order is taken with such a people, but one after another to be thrust into the vilest gaols, as Newgate, White Lyon, &c., amongst the most vagrant rogues, the most infectious and lewd wretches in all the nation. The Lord our God open the ears and eyes of you, the civil magistrates, to hear and see our miseries, and some way to relieve us; that He also may remember *you* in the day of distress, sickness, and death, which is the way of all flesh. Amen.

“In tender consideration of all the premises, our lamentable and humble petition unto your honours is, even for God's cause, as you regard the lives of her Majesty's faithful subjects, that you will be a means to obtain for us so much favour as to have equal trial of the matters in question, which thing was never so long delayed in this realm (for ought we read) to the veriest papist and heretic that ever were; or else that all who areailable by law, may be bailed from these noisome prisons and gaols this spring time till the latter end of next summer, upon sufficient security to answer unto whatever shall be objected against us. This petition we make wholly for those whose bodies are in present danger of death by

grievous sickness and want, or else distressed by long confinement. We desire it for us all, to this end, that we may labour in our avocations, or at least have an eye to our families, thereby to guide them better than they can now be governed, who, by reason of our long absence from them, may soon fall into some of those heinous crimes whereof we or they are now most unjustly slandered. But what is youth without government? and what government can there be in those houses, whose masters are constantly prisoners, whose dames are constantly suitors, and whose shop windows are always shut?

“Right Honourable,—We are persuaded, that no chronicles or records, or books of monuments, do show a denial of both these requests to any sort or sect, who might be drawn or persuaded to yield such obedience as our declaration doth manifest, but we have been and are willing to subscribe to these points of our own accord. The greatest supposed heretics in Queen Mary’s days, and the vilest malefactors now-a-days, have had, and still have, lawful examining, committing, and trial and gaol deliverance, within a short space appointed by statute, which some of us can prove we have not had, nor can have. And shall a people who are found and confessed to be the most contrary in judgment, and greatest enemies to the Pope’s supremacy, the seminaries, and all the brood of that apostate throne—with all their trumperies, *and to the King of Spain and all his treacheries*, be as hardly or more cruelly dealt with than any popish recusants, and that in Queen Elizabeth’s days? We cease to argue with our betters, yet in all humility and reverence to your persons and places, we are enforced to stir up your affections by humble petition thus earnestly, because through the last commission about Jesuists, seminaries, and priests, *and such as take part with the Pope and Spanish king*, we also are sought after, imprisoned, and indicted as if we were such. Indeed, right honourable, *both we and they do refuse to come to the parish assemblies, but with what difference in faith towards God and loyalty to our prince our declaration sheweth.*

“Now, Right Honourable, if we should set forth at large a manifestation of the particular handling of most of us since her Majesty’s reign, namely, when we were committed, by whom, how examined, how many committed and kept close without warrant, how long after kept in prison by warrants, without any cause showed, how many years some have thus been detained, with accusation by witnesses or by proffers of bail rejected, what usage we had by keepers and gaolers, how many have died in prisons, and such like things, we might bring open to view such proceedings of the bishops, and such as they stir up hereunto, contrary to all law and conscience, as would make our merciful Queen and her godly magistrates’ hearts to pity us, when they should but hear or see that which we have known and felt. How long shall we desire to have peace with all men, if it were possible? How long shall our fear of being thought malicious, contentious, and seekers of revenge, cause us to keep silence, and not make such a grievous complaint as this would be, but not seek, by all lawful means, to obtain such a speedy redress as this would ask? Would to God that you knew the truth of those things which we have suffered, then, no doubt, you would pity our lamentable case. In consideration whereof, and of our long imprisonments and great miseries, we humbly entreat for *justice*, according to her Majesty’s laws, which thing, we trust, will not be denied us, seeing *we desire nothing touching the liberty of our bodies or minds but what the laws of our Queen do allow, and have provided for us, though we could not write for ourselves, nor any serjeant, counsel, or attorney, ever yet durst, or would, plead our poor and lamentable cause!* For which mercy and justice showed we shall be bound to pray to God, our heavenly father, that He will multiply her Majesty’s years, if such be His will, with more and more blessings, and yours with honour added to honour, and establish unity in true religion and peace of conscience amongst them who profess the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Seasons passed away to the imprisoned Separatists in sad succession, bringing no relief nor the prospect of amelioration.

They waited in long suspense for some acknowledgment of their importunate appeals, but there was no reply.

Such are the prison memorials of these heroic Christian men, brought together from various archives, and placed for the first time probably in the chronological order which renders them intelligible, and exhibits to us in a light so affecting their spirit and aim.

The justice they sought with such earnestness, as we shall find in the sequel, was denied them by all parties. Their appeal to posterity has yet to be answered. History has assigned to them no fitting place. Their names are often mentioned by those who inherit the freedom for which they struggled in the tone of apology. They are dismissed with slender notice as "rigid Brownists." Uhden, the friend of Neander, undertook to give a sketch of English Congregationalism without the slightest allusion to Barrowe and Greenwood. Dr. Merle D'Aubigné did not trouble himself to enquire into the subject. But the time is come for the vindication of the MARTYRS OF THE SECOND REFORMATION. The materials essential for the purposes of historic justice are ample and varied. We are indebted, under Providence, for their preservation to the vigilance of their foes, who seized and impounded the precious documents, unconscious of the design of the Supreme Ruler to bring forth their righteousness as the light and their judgment as the noonday.

your friend wth feelings for you
H. Barrowe

FAC-SIMILE OF BARROWE'S AUTOGRAPH.

VII.

PRISON CONFERENCES,

OR THE

Puritan Inquisition.

“Count we o’er earth’s chosen heroes,—they were souls that stood alone
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,
Stood serene and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man’s plain truth to manhood and to God’s supreme design.”

LOWELL.

WHITGIFT professed a strong desire for peace. In a dedication “to his loving nurse the Christian Church of England,” he says: “I do with all my heart hate contention and strife, and especially in matters of religion among such as profess the self-same gospel.” RICHARD HOOKER, the ablest defender of the Anglican Church, was prompted to write his treatise by his profound reverence for law and order. He appeals to the Puritans, in the name of charity, “to lay aside the gall of bitterness.” “Far more comfort it were for us,” he says, “so small is the joy we take in these strifes, to labour under the same yoke as men that look for the same eternal reward of their labours, to be joined with you in bands of indissoluble love and amity, to live as if our persons being many our souls were but one, rather than in such dismembered sort to spend our few and wretched days in a tedious prosecuting of wearisome contentions, the end whereof, if they have not some speedy end, will be heavy on both sides.”

The methods sanctioned by these eminent churchmen to "reduce" the Puritans to quiet uniformity, were only consistent with the theory of a State establishment. Persuasion is foreign to law, it must be enforced by penalty. If an entire nation (except a theocracy) is to yield unfailing submission to one ecclesiastical regime, it is certain in the nature of things it can never be by sincere conviction. It must either be from coercion or the passive acquiescence of listless formality. The national mind, in the judgment of Hooker, ought to move, in obedience to prelatical authority, with the same exactness as the planets obey the law of gravitation, "in solemn silence all." Preaching, according to this system, is to a great extent unnecessary. The pastor properly is merged into the spiritual constable.

The more serene the temper of the ecclesiastical potentate, the more rigorous might be his administration. Very calmly Hooker asserts the right of bishops, "in causes ecclesiastical," "to strike with the sword of secular punishments." He says, "It reacheth no farther than *only unto restraint of liberty by imprisonment* (which yet is not done only by the laws of the land, and by virtue of authority derived from the prince), a thing which being allowable in priests amongst the Jews must needs have received some strange alteration in nature since, if it be now so pernicious and venomous to be coupled with a spiritual vocation in any man which beareth office in the church of Christ. Shemaiah, writing to the college of priests which were in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah, the principal of them, told them they were appointed of God, "that they might be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man which raved, and did make himself a prophet" (Jer. xxix. 26), to the end that they might, by the force of this their authority, "put such in prison and in the stocks." Perhaps on the whole it would be preferable to be condemned by a savage like Bonner than to be sent to prison for an indefinite term by an evangelical magistrate speaking in the bland terms of the "judicious Hooker." Whitgift, in the same treatise which contains his sighs for unity and peace, answers the Puritans more sharply.

“Again,” say the Puritan leaders, “such as are no sins (as if a man conform not himself to popish orders and ceremonies, if he come not at the whistle of him who hath by God’s word no authority to call—we mean chancellors, officials, doctors, and all that rabble), are grievously punished, not only by excommunication, suspension, deprivation, and other (as they term it) spiritual coercion, but also by banishing, imprisoning, reviling, taunting, and what not.” The imperious Whitgift replies in lofty disdain, “Here you are judge in your own cause, and therefore you make a mite an elephant. *It is meet* that such as contemn the *good orders and laws* of that place where they dwell—such as make schisms, factions, and contentions in the church—such as cannot or will not be subject and obedient to their superiors—should be by discipline either reformed or removed. You must not look to live as you list, and be without check. Chancellors, officials, doctors, have no authority, in respect of their offices, to banish or to imprison, and therefore you nip (as you think) some greater persons. You make much of a little; too much lenity maketh you so wanton, and so ready to cast off the yoke of due obedience. How you are punished the world seeth: although you and your fautors [patrons] can bruit abroad that you are persecuted and cruelly dealt with, when as in very deed you have much more favour showed you than you deserve.”

It was extremely irksome to the dignitaries of the Anglican Establishment to have to defend themselves by argument, when by a more summary process they could silence their opponents or remove them altogether. But there was a light from the darkest dungeon that could not be quenched, and a voice from the “closest” prison that they found it impossible to stifle. Ambitious churchmen therefore were put forward to vindicate the claims of the prelates to supremacy. Dr. Some, the master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, was one of the more valiant. He undertook to put down JOHN PENRY, a student of the same college.

No better illustrations can be desired of the spirit of a State Church than are supplied to us by the reasonings of Dr. Some.

The defenders of the Establishment, though diffident in the use of the New Testament, have always been strong in weapons supplied by Judaism and Popery.

Give them the Book of Kings and the Fathers, and their case could be made out with complete satisfaction to their "superiors," if not to the conviction of their assailants. "If it were lawful," says Dr. Some, "for these kings of Judah to command and compel their subjects, it is not unlawful for ours to do the like. If it be not lawful to compel recusants, why are Asa, Josias, Manasseh, commended by the Holy Ghost for this excellent course?"

"Ezra was a learned scribe: he was authorized by the King of Persia to teach them beyond the River Euphrates the law of God which did not know it, and to punish such as refused to learn. Artaxerxes' warrant is set down in this sort: 'And thou Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.'"

A precedent even still stronger, in the view of Dr. Some, was to be found in the King of Babylon. "Nebuchadnezzar made a decree that every people, nation, and language, which spake any blasphemy against the God of Sidrach, Misach, and Abednago, should be drawn in pieces, and their houses made a jakes," &c. (Dan. iii.)

"Augustine," adds Dr. Some, "the Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, was a very famous man; he was once of opinion that heretics were to be pressed by argument, and not by the magistrate: his reason then was 'lest we should have in them counterfeit catholics, whom we knew to be notorious heretics.' But after weighty consideration, he changed his former opinion, and is very resolute that recusants may and ought to be compelled by the magistrate." (August. Epist. xlviii. 204.)

“To punish and not to teach were tyranny. Again, to teach and not to punish, were to harden them in their ancient custom, and to make them slow to enter the path of salvation.”

A great point with the Anglican divines was to show that both their ministry and their baptism were derived from the Church of Rome. They claimed in consequence to be in direct line with the apostles through the channel of the papacy. Penry contended, against Dr. Some, that Rome, as the seat of Antichrist, could not be a true church.

“Antichrist,” he says, “I grant should sit as God in the temple of God, since he planted his pestilent chair therein. Popery, indeed, hath invaded the seats and possessions of true religion, and began first where the truth was professed. For the mystery of iniquity first appeared within the church, and not elsewhere where true religion flourished, and not among the heathen, neither could he be that adversary whose beginning should be in paganism. But although popery took root in the soil where the true church was planted, yet it so grew there that it still continued to be the synagogue of Satan, and could never as yet be the church of God, howsoever it hath overgrown the possession thereof. And what though their fathers, who are now papists, were within the covenant, as professing true religion, shall it therefore follow that their idolatrous sons should be so to? If they return the Lord hath mercy in store for them I deny not.

“That which is spoken concerning the possession of the truth by the forefathers, is not altogether true in popery; for there be many large regions, now professing popery, where not so much as the name of Christ was heard until they were become grossly popish. So that their first step was out of paganism unto popery. And thus is the estate of all those poor oppressed vassals the West Indians, who now in great numbers profess Romish idolatry. For at such time as the Spaniard invading their land, brought upon them the most miserable slavery of the body and soul that are brought upon any people under heaven, they had not so much as heard whether there was any Christ, but were most heathenish and senseless idolators, as may

appear by the popish historiographers themselves who wrote the stories of those times, and therefore (to omit them, whose posterities many of the nations within Europe are, that have refused the light of the gospel), though it were granted that the rest of the popish rabble were in the covenant, yet these miserable heathen papists can be said to be under no covenant but that which is made out of popery and paganism. I hope Mr. Some, howsoever you may be persuaded, that other popish shavelings can deliver a sacrament, yet that you will doubt whether any man could be assured to receive those holy seals at the heathen massmongers remaining in Cuba, Hispaniola, Mexico, or any other Eastern parts."

Dr. Some replies in the tone of one who knows that the temporal sword is on his side. "You would never," he says to Penry, "I think, have vented such motley stuff as this, if you had thought it would have been looked on. I can assure you, that besides me, whom you have put to a little pains, your treatise hath been viewed and reviewed by very many learned men, who condemn it for a foolish and fantastical babble. If the West Indians, after profession of their belief in the Holy Trinity, were baptized, as you say, by popish shavelings, I assure myself that they received true baptism, and were therefore engrafted into Christ. We, in the Church of England, need not sail (thanks be to God) to the massmongers in Cuba, Hispaniola, Mexico, or any other part of the Indies; we have God's holy seals amongst us. If you call such of the Indians as are baptized heathen, you do them great wrong; for baptism is the external badge of a Christian. I do not marvel though you be bold with the Indians, which are so far off, when you are so saucy with the principal of the religion in this noble land—I mean our magistrates and learned men, which are singular ornaments of our church and commonwealth. The question you move shall receive my answer, when I understand that *either you or some other of your fantastical disciples are on shipboard, and under sail for Mexico in India.*.....

"If either Mr. Penry or any of his fantastical crew shall think much of my speech, I do not pass. I confess freely that

sharp words are not sufficient. I hope the magistrates will consider further of him and such as he is. Duro nodo, durus cuneus, &c.—that is, a wedge of iron is fittest for knotty wood.”*

Notwithstanding the contemptuous and arbitrary treatment the Puritan ministers received, they still leaned to the Anglican church, and entreated to be restored to their livings. Though they had themselves suffered bonds and privation, they were willing to accept any service from the hierarchy that might cause them to be reinstated. It is not pleasant to find in “godly and learned men” a spirit so servile; but we should not understand the genius of the system under consideration if we failed to mark its inevitable effects.

The prelates devised a plan for the clergy of London, including those of the Puritan section, to visit the imprisoned Separatists in the capacity of “detectives.”

“I, the Bishop of London,” so runs the mandate, “have received order from my lord’s grace of Canterbury, with the advice of both the chief justices, that conference should presently be had with these sectaries which do *forsake our church*, and be for *the same committed prisoners*; for that it is intended, *if by our good and learned persuasions they will not be reduced to*

* The writings of Dr. Some were brought by the Separatists under the notice of their imprisoned leaders. Barrowe filled the margin of the copy put into his hands with annotations intended for the confirmation of the brethren who might be assailed by the arrows furnished from it as a quiver. By some mishap the volume containing these notes was seized by the prison authorities. Shortly after this unfortunate casualty, Barrowe was surprised by a visit (Jan. 1, 1588) from the offended author, Dr. Some, accompanied by Mr. Justice Young and a warden of the Fleet. Mr. Young apprized the prisoner that they were sent to him by the Lords of the Council. Dr. Some produced the book, and, pointing to the marginal comment, said: “You wrote it, belike?” Barrowe replied: “It may be I was privy to the writing of it.” Turning to page 34, containing the words: “The Church of England hath Christ for the head and foundation,” Dr. Some read the comment to this effect: “That the author made their church to have two heads.” Barrowe, in reply to the question of the justice—“Will you abide by it?” said “Yea.”

“Take witnesses,” said the excited messengers from the Privy Council, and left the prisoner to his reflections.

conform themselves to their dutiful obedience, that they shall be proceeded with all according to the course of the common law. Therefore, these are to will and require you, and every one of you, whose names are mentioned in the schedule hereunto annexed, in her Majesty's name, by virtue of her high commission, for causes ecclesiastical, to us and others directed, that twice every week (at the least) you do repair to those persons and prisoners whose names are in this ticket set down, and that you seek by all learned and discreet demeanour you may reduce them from their errors ; and for *that either their conformity or disobedience may be more manifest when they shall come to their trial, therefore we require you to set down in writing the particular days of your going to confer with them, and likewise your censure what it is of them, as that, if occasion do serve to use it, you will be sworn unto.* We require Mr. Mullins to send for all these several preachers, and deliver them the names of the prisoners, together whereunto they are appointed to resort, and to request them, as aforesaid, to take the charge upon them, according to the trust committed unto them. And in *case any of them refuse, that then you require him or them forthwith to repair to me at Fulham, and to certify me of their answers before their coming.* And so we bid you farewell ; the 25th of February, 1589."

Forty-two preachers were assigned to fifty-two prisoners, in seven different places of confinement. To the Puritan preachers in the list we cannot suppose that the service could be acceptable ; but the necessities of their position urged them to the degrading task. All knew the unpleasantness of the alternative, in having to repair to the bishop at Fulham. No less than six clergymen visited Barrowe and Greenwood. They required the most "discreet demeanour" to meet them without committing themselves to sentiments that might turn to their disadvantage. The Separatist leaders, aware that their Puritan inquisitors held views almost as obnoxious to the bishops as their own, were disposed to press the points on which, for obvious reasons, the visiting clergy were anxious to avoid. It was somewhat difficult to fix on the best place for conference. If they met the Separatists in their cells the regu-

lations of the gaoler required that they should be locked up for the time with the prisoners.

In that case Barrowe and Greenwood, provided with pen, ink, and paper, wrote down propositions for debate that were extremely inconvenient. To avoid them the preachers sometimes pleaded haste, and tried the door only to find that they must remain exposed to searching questions submitted to them in turn by the fearless Separatists. Worse than all, they found by some means that the prison colloquy soon got into print. If they appointed a more accessible place of meeting, turnkeys and prisoners, suffered to walk in the court of the gaol, drawn by curiosity, found some pretext for entering the room, or stood at the window to listen, and more publicity was given to the pungent remarks of Barrowe and his companion in bonds than the authorities approved. Many of the original papers written in these conferences have been preserved. On one occasion, the visitors who came for the purpose of finding evidence to be used on the day of trial, proposed to open the colloquy with prayer. The prisoners declined the devotional exercise, under the impression that they would not agree in the petitions that might be used, and plainly intimated to the preachers that under the circumstances their presence was not desired. One or two passages from the prison conference report will be sufficient to indicate its character:—

Hutchinson. “Why do you not come to church?”

Greenwood. “Your church was not separated from the world, and so could not be *ecclesia*, a people *called out*.”

Hutchinson. “I know not what you mean by separation.”

Greenwood. “You know what *badal* (in Hebrew) signifieth, and as light is separated from darkness, so must the church from the profane. In the true church none can be debarred from the sacraments that make, with knowledge, true confession of their sins, and promise obedience to the Word of God, and to be ordered by Christ’s ordinances; but I see no such confession made by your communicants.”

Bright. “Why, do you think our people have not made a true confession of their sins, and promised amendment publicly?”

Greenwood. "No, your parish assemblies were never received into the true faith, to submit themselves unto Christ's ordinances, by true confession, with knowledge and understanding, for that confession they made or make is but a verbal repetition of words, as one might teach a parrot."

Barrowe complained to his visitors of close confinement.

Hutchinson. "We will not hear your complaints because we cannot redress them."

Andros. "For close confinement you are most happy; the solitary and contemplative life I hold the most blessed life. It is the life I would choose."

Barrowe. "You speak philosophically, but not christianly. So sweet is the harmony of God's graces unto me in the congregation, and the conversation of the saints at all times, as I think myself as a sparrow on the house-top when I am exiled from them. But could you be content also, Mr. Andros, to be kept from exercise and air so long together?—these are also necessary to a natural body."

Andros. "I say not that I would want air. But who be those saints you speak; where are they?"

Barrowe. "They are even those poor Christians whom you so blaspheme and persecute, and now most unjustly hold in your prisons."

Andros. "But where is their congregation?"

Barrowe. "Though I knew I purposed not to tell you."

Hutchinson. "They are a company of sectaries, as you also are."

Barrowe. "Know you what a sectary is?"

Hutchinson. "I know you to be sectaries and schismatics."

Barrowe. "What! both? It should seem you know not what a sectary is. But it is evident that your church is deeply set, both in schism and apostacy."

Hutchinson. "A sectary and schismatic are both one."

Barrowe. "That is not so; a schismatic is ever cut off from the church, a sectary is not so. Your parish assemblies are not churches, nor yet are your ministers pastors. There must be sheep before there be a flock; a flock before there be a

shepherd. *Christ's church always consisteth of a holy free people, separate from the world, rightly called and gathered unto Christ, walking forth in faith and obedience*; but the people of this parish, and generally of the land, have not yet been thus separated from the wicked of the land, neither as yet been gathered unto Christ, but stand mingled together with the wicked."

Andros. "There were two cast out the last Sunday in London."

Barrowe. "Not by the church, but by the power of Antichrist, by some chancellor or commissary."

In this free manner every point of ecclesiastical discipline was discussed. Sometimes the prisoners, in the excitement of the occasion, used expressions that were carefully noted down, to tell against them at their trial. With respect to the appointment of clergymen to their parishes, Barrowe said: "You buy and sell, chop and change your ecclesiastical offices, and livings of your churches, as horses in a fair." The comparison was somewhat homely, but the meaning was only equivalent to that of the words of our Lord Jesus: "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise."

Deprived of their leaders, the company of poor persecuted Christians to whom Barrowe refers were left for a time without church organization. Like the disciples at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, when the apostles were driven away by persecution, they met together for united worship and mutual edification until pastors should be given to them by Him who is made Head over all things to His body the church. In this feeble and apparently disjointed state they were subjected to the severe reflections of the Puritan ministers. "You are not of the Church of Christ," said Cartwright, to his sister-in-law, who had joined the Separatists; "for you have no ministers at all, and no election at all. There is not so much as one among you that is fit for the function of the ministry, by those necessary gifts which are required in the ministers of the Word. You have not the truth, for you are not taught by Christian pastors." "The truth," replied Mrs. Stubbs, "is taught by our Saviour Christ and His apostles, and believed of us. And the Lord will comfortably teach us one of another, if it be

His will and the most to His own glory ; and yet I humbly beseech Him that He will bring us together in church fellowship, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, according to the order of the gospel, and that we may ever love the truth and increase in the knowledge and obedience thereof, howsoever we be scattered and counted as sheep for the slaughter." "How came you," continued Cartwright, "to know the true exposition of the Scriptures, having no gift to reach unto it, nor any to teach you, or to translate them for you?" "The scriptures of God," his sister replied, "are not like men's words ; for no man knoweth the mind of a man but himself. *We see our hearts in the word of God*, and I think some of the churches of God have the interpretation of the tongues. But consider your own ministers. Truly my heart mourneth to see the general hardness of heart when we speak to any that stand with you. The Word of God can take no place."

"You can say nothing to the purpose," added Cartwright ; "remember your frailty as a woman, and the small ordinary means you have had of discerning exactly the truth." "I do not, dear brother," rejoined Mrs. Stubbs, "pass for man's judgment. I open unto the Lord in obeying His truth with all my heart. I marvel that you can say I answer nothing to the purpose. I should greatly rejoice to see you profess the truth you know in uprightness of heart."

In conformity with the plans steadily pursued by Whitgift, the Puritan leaders, notwithstanding all their subserviency, were thrown into the same prison with Barrowe and Greenwood. They disclaimed most earnestly all sympathy with Brownists or Barrowists ; but this was no protection. There was no new cause of offence given, and no just cause why they should be further troubled. The primate knew, however, that he might go safely beyond the ordinary bounds of law, and since he had an object to gain, he directed his pursuivants to bring Cartwright and his Puritan compeers into the Fleet prison. They remonstrated with Lord Burleigh, and showed the injustice and peculiar hardship of their case. The Lord

Treasurer and the judges were inclined to show them favour, especially under the circumstances of personal and relative affection into which they were thrown. Their wives were incessantly occupied in presenting touching memorials, and they appeared more than once to be at the point of liberation. The bishops were as diligent in finding new pretexts for their detention. For example, they discovered that a subordinate at Warwick hospital, acting as a substitute for Cartwright, prayed indiscreetly, both in manner and as to time, intending, as the informant insinuated, to prevent the attendance of the inmates at the regular services of the church. Cartwright sent immediately an order to dismiss the erring chaplain, and entreated for himself and his Puritan companions, that they might be set free. The archbishop consented to allow them to go out on bail to church on Sundays, and two of their number were suffered on week days to attend to matters of urgent business, on condition of returning to prison in the evening. The Anglican party seem to have had a two-fold object in this tantalizing process. They hoped to induce Cartwright to win over Barrowe, and to weary the Puritans to an absolute surrender of their convictions. Cartwright complied once with the request to confer with Barrowe. The interview with the intrepid Separatist was not encouraging to the visitor, and he could not be persuaded to make a second attempt. Barrowe showed the Puritan standard bearer, that when he was receding from the conflict, the poor Brownists felt bound to act on the principles taught them by the Nonconformists, now so anxious to obtain release by silence or submission. Raising his chains, Barrowe said to Cartwright, "These holy bonds are free from Antichrist." We can well understand the reluctance of the Puritan champion, enfeebled in health and dejected in spirit, to renew the encounter. It was understood by all parties that for the time the Puritans were broken. Heylin, the church historian, with the frankness of a zealot, tells us that for this victory over their opponents the defenders of the Anglican church received the reward she knows so well how to bestow. "Bancroft," he says, "was a man of most

undaunted spirit, one who well knew his work, and did it. When chaplain only to the Lord Chancellor Hatton he pieced himself with Dr. Whitgift, not long after his first coming to the see of Canterbury, to whom he proved a great support in gaining the Lord Chancellor for him, by whose assistance he was enabled to hold out against the overruling power of the Earl of Leicester, the patron-general of the faction. By four books written by him, with Dr. Thomas Bilson and Dr. Richard Cosens, the *Puritan faction was so muzzled that they were not able to bark for a long time after*. Nor do they want their several just rewards for such good performances—Bilson being made Bishop of Worcester, and not long after Bishop of Winton; Bancroft advanced to the see of London; and Dr. Cozens Vicar-general and Dean of the Arches, within few years after being consecrated Bishop of London.”

One thing, however, is certain—the imprisoned Separatists, as a body, evinced no disposition to surrender. There is some reason, on the contrary, to infer that the cruelties practised upon them excited the determination in natural feeling not to flinch, and prompted expressions not required in the assertion of fixed and holy principle. We may regret the manifestation of heat, but we can scarcely wonder that, under such oppression, they should adopt terms that men sitting quietly beneath their own vine and fig-tree would deem somewhat unadvised. In the petitions of the Puritans and Separatists we find a characteristic difference. The former propose to accommodate themselves in any practicable way, so that they may be restored to their families and their church livings. The latter still make their appeal on the ground of equity.

The following document resembles several petitions we have quoted, but it is worthy of being recorded as an evidence of the unsubdued fidelity to principle at this particular juncture:—

“To the Right Honourable Lords and others of Her Majesty’s Most Honourable Privy Council.

“Most lamentably express unto your Lordships, Right Honourable, her Majesty’s poor distressed and innocent

subjects, their most miserable estate, that have to the number of above three score persons, being for the space many of them well nigh three whole years cast and detained in sundry most noisome and vile prisons, used with all inhumanity, debarred from all comfort or access of their nearest friends, wives, &c., kept from their honest trades, and all other means of relief, to their utter undoing, and affamishment of them, their desolate wives and sorrowly children, all benefit or help of the laws shut up against them, no peaceable order taken, or hope of redress offered, but daily new injuries accumulate upon them, to the unspeakable misery of their bodies and discomfort of their souls, so that sundry of them have by this usage ended their sorrowful days; the rest that remain, through want of relief and noisomeness of the prison, are likely forthwith to follow, and yield up their innocent lives, under this cruelty, to the pulling down God's wrath upon the whole land for the blood of his servants, except the same God in mercy incline your honourable hearts to some compassion, to look upon their unchristian usage, to examine the cause and add some redress; that if they be found guilty of any such crime as deserveth bonds or death, than they may be speedily produced and have judgment according to law, and not thus unmercifully be detained in perpetual and lingering close imprisonment, without any trial, until they be made away. But if, according to their protestation, they be found unblameable of any such crime or offence, then they may have your honours' accustomed gracious favour, and the benefit of true subjects, and in the meanwhile they all most humbly and instantly, even for the love and mercy of Christ, beseech your honours, that for the preservation of their lives, their wives and children, they may, by good and gracious means, be presently restored to their painful labours in their honest trades, or else by some other means be relieved before your honours go out of the city. Whereby they may, according to their bounden duties, serve their sovereign prince and your honours, live dutifully and orderly in their dealings to the glory of God, which you shall highly advance thereby, and

their poor wives and children, as also all that live and fear the Lord in the land, be bound to praise God for your honours' Christian compassion and fatherly care in the cause of the innocent, and to pray for the increase of all God's blessings and graces upon your honours for the same. 27 Aug. 1590."

The particulars we have thus briefly recited may serve to mark the distinction between the Separatists and the Puritans. *The Separatists reduced to practice the lessons they had received from the Puritans.* They said: "For adventuring to erect the discipline of Christ, without the leave of the Christian magistrate, haply ye may condemn us as fools, in that *we hazard thereby our estates and persons further than you which are that way more wise think necessary*; but of any offence or sin therein committed against God, with what conscience can you accuse us, *when your own positions are*, that the things we observe should every one of them be dearer to us than ten thousand lives; that they are peremptory commandments of God; that no mortal man can dispense with them, and that the magistrate grievously sinneth in not constraining thereunto? Will ye blame any man for doing that of his own accord which all men should be compelled to do that are not willing of themselves? When God commandeth, shall we answer that we will obey, if so be Cæsar will grant us leave? Is discipline an ecclesiastical matter or civil? If an ecclesiastical, it must of necessity belong to the duty of a minister. The people being willing to be under the sceptre of Christ, the minister of God, unto whose hands the Lord Himself hath put that sceptre, is without all excuse if thereby he guide them not."

J. Thomas Cartwright

FAC-SIMILE OF CARTWRIGHT'S AUTOGRAPH.

VIII.

JOHNSON AND PENRY,

OR THE

Force of Truth.

“ Christ said not to his first discipleship,
Go forth and preach impostures to the world :
But gave them TRUTH to build on ; and the sound
Was mighty on their lips ; nor needed they,
Beside the Gospel, either spear or shield
To aid them in their warfare for the faith.”

DANTE.

THE feeble band of persecuted people in prison had to encounter opposition from every quarter. It was found that external force was not sufficient to overcome them. Bound in fetters, shut out from society, and almost from the light of day, wasted by sickness, and covered with reproach, their principles nevertheless spread, and the number of their converts continually increased. Humiliating as it might be to the dignitaries of the Anglican church, they were compelled, in self-defence, to prepare formal replies to the writings of Barrowe and Greenwood, or to accept the polemical service Puritan divines were disposed to render in the hope of improving their own position. Dr. Some, whose lucubrations we have before noticed, and GEORGE GIFFARD, the Puritan vicar of Maldon, signalized themselves in this theological encounter. The position of Giffard was by no means enviable. He had suffered imprisonment, and was suspended from his living,

but in common with his brethren under restraint for nonconformity, as distinct from honest separation, he professed, and probably sincerely felt, great abhorrence of the Brownists. It is not the most inviting task to go over the thorny labyrinth of controversy, as conducted at that period, and to try to discover the real drift of the writers. Sifted from invective and bitter personalities, the meaning contained in the pages of Some and Giffard might be expressed in few words.

Barrowe and Greenwood were charged with Anabaptism and Donatism. Their allusion in these terms of opprobrium will not be generally understood without a word of explanation. It is well known by all conversant with the writings and examination of the Separatists, that they observed the rite of infant baptism. But this was not the point intended by the imputation of their opponents. The fanatical Anabaptists of Germany and of Holland had rendered their name infamous by licentiousness and violence. Combining the practices of the modern Mormons with fury like that of the rebels in China, their excesses awakened the utmost horror. It was therefore a great stroke of polemical cunning to brand the Separatists with a name that would excite universal disgust. Even the "judicious Hooker" was not superior to the controversial trick, the design of which is now perfectly apparent, "There is no remedy," he said; "all must come by devolution at the length, even as the family of Browne will have it, unto the godly among the people; for confusion unto the wise and great, the poor and the simple, some Knipperdoling with his retinue, must take the word of the Lord in hand, and the making of church laws and orders must prove to be their right in the end." The insinuation is, that the "common people" could not in the Christian church discharge their duty or exercise their privileges but as incendiaries and fanatics.

With equal ingenuity, and the same want of candour, Giffard framed an historical argument for a similar purpose. The Donatists of the fourth century held sentiments, in some particulars, coincident with those of the Separatists. For example, they maintained that the church should cast out from

its body those who were known, by open and manifest sins, to be unworthy members. They held that a distinction should be preserved between the church and the world. They were, moreover, opposed to persecution. "Did the apostles," they said, "ever persecute any one, or did Christ ever deliver any one over to the secular power? Christ, in dying for men, has given Christians the example to die, but not to kill—to suffer wrong, not to requite it. The Apostle tells us of what he had endured, not of what he had done to others. But what have you to do with the princes of this world, in whom the Christian cause has ever found only its enemies?"

If Giffard had confined his comparison between the Separatists and the Donatists to these points, there would have been no injustice; but it is known that a set of the wildest fanatics sprung into existence, who incorporated some of the principles held by the Donatists, and these committed the most frightful atrocities. Just as Paul was called "a ringleader of sedition," it was insinuated that those who refused to acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the Queen were only waiting an opportunity to plunge their country into the miseries of anarchy or civil war.

It is in disproof of all such calumnies the document contained in a previous chapter, entitled "A brief declaration of our faith and loyalty,"* has such peculiar value. Congregational polity—the polity, as we believe, of the New Testament—is incompatible with the political or military combinations which have proved so fatal in other systems.

It was further objected to the Separatists, that they were persons of poor condition, and comparatively few in number. They were the Nazarenes of the Reformation. The effect of this representation of their weakness and poverty was not to be altogether counteracted. A religious census, if taken in the reign of Elizabeth, would have told seriously against them. After the lapse of centuries the humble condition of the primitive Christians is invested with a certain interest that has often

* P. 91, et seq.

lent a charm to the flowing narrative or to the eloquent discourse. "Hearken, beloved, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, that they should be rich in faith." In a comment on these words of the apostle, RICHARD HOOKER adds: "Hath He not chosen the refuse of the world to be heirs of His kingdom, which He hath promised to them that love Him? Hath He not chosen the offscourings of men to be the lights of the world, and the apostles of Jesus Christ? Men unlearned, yet how fully replenished with understanding; few in number, yet how great in power. Contemptible in show, yet in spirit how strong. How wonderful. 'It is death for me,' saith Hilary, 'to be ignorant of the unsearchable mystery of the Son of God; of which mystery, notwithstanding, I should have been ignorant, but that a poor fisherman, unknown, unlearned, new come from his boat with his clothes ringing wet, hath opened his mouth and taught me. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' These poor silly creatures have made us rich in the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ."

But how different is the poverty of sacred rhetoric, seen in the distance, and that which is present, actual, and unrelieved by the contrast of beauty, rank, and splendour.

The Separatists were spoken of by Lord Bacon as "base, silly people." Shakespeare dismissed them with a single line of witty contempt; and, notwithstanding their earnest piety, the Puritans could not be reconciled to a people undistinguished by any worldly advantage.

Marvellous was the homage to principle that Barrowe could turn away from the cloisters of the university and the magnificence of the court, to enter, of his own free choice, into the filthy dungeon, and become associated for life with a people so impoverished and despised.

Giffard charged them with arrogance and presumption. This "vile schism," he says, are "desirous of victory, triumph, and glory over all, both wise and learned." "The stern of Christ's ship," he adds, "requires men of the greatest wisdom, learning, and sobriety;" but the common "artificer, the apprentice,

and the brewer, will guide the same with *presumptuous ignorance and bold frenzy.*"

In reply to this fierce assailant, Barrowe and Greenwood maintained the right of "private men," however lowly in condition, to act on their honest convictions in obedience to the laws of Christ. "We hold it our duty," they said, "without all delay, to obey the voice of God, which calleth us out of all places where He is not truly worshipped according to His word, where His laws are wilfully broken and Antichrist's laws obeyed; and this to be the commandment of God in the law by His prophets, Christ Himself, and His apostles, is everywhere in the scripture manifest (without exception of persons, or restraint of calling), even unto every one that will be saved.

"In the rest (whatsoever you surmise of us), we arrogate no swelling titles; we are, as we profess to be, simple-hearted Christians, which seek to worship and obey Christ as our only King, Priest, and Prophet; and to our Prince we are humble and obedient subjects in all things which are not repugnant to God's laws."

"God commandeth His faithful servants, being as yet private men, together to build His Church, according to the true pattern of Christ's Testament (without altering, changing, or innovating). And for this we have the example of the primitive churches for our patterns and warrant, which sued not to courts and parliaments, nor waited upon princes' pleasures, when the stones were in readiness, but presently, having received the faith of Christ, received likewise the ordinances of Christ, and continued in the same."

"By the Church, we understand every particular congregation subsisting of all the members. Every of which congregations hath equal interest in the word, promises, judgments, and power of Christ. Christ hath given unto all churches the same testament, ministry, laws, and ordinances, with the like charge and authority to observe the same. He hath given them the same order and communion in all places, one and the same rule to walk by towards them within the faith, as also to avoid

and cast out such as depart from the faith or walk inordinately. Neither hath Christ given unto any one church more power or prerogative than unto all other, or set one church above and over another, otherwise than to wish and seek the good of each other and all, to admonish, exhort, stir up each other as occasion requireth. And unto this every member of Christ is also bound in his calling, but not to intrude and encroach upon the public actions and duties of the whole church, or the particular functions and offices of others. As to pastors and elders, their office extendeth but unto those flocks whereof the Holy Ghost hath set them overseers, and not unto all churches in this manner, to which their ministry neither doth nor can extend."

"The Christian deacon is to attend to the faithful collection and distribution of the benevolence of the saints. He is to attend in his function to that peculiar flock whereof he is chosen deacon, and not to intrude and encroach upon many churches. A Christian deacon is to keep himself within the bounds of his own office in sobriety, and not to intermeddle with the pastor's office also, with the ministration of the word and sacraments." (Col. i. 18; 1 Cor. xii. 27; Acts vi.; Rom. xii. 8; 1 Tim. iii.)

"The church knoweth how to give honour and reverence unto their elders, especially to them that labour in the word and doctrine. The church of Christ is taught to obey and submit unto their leaders, to acknowledge them that labour amongst them, and that are set over them in the Lord, and to admonish them, and to hold those in superabundant love for their work sake; the elders also, among themselves, know how to give honour one unto another by going before, yet all this, without prejudice to themselves that give, or detriment to him that receiveth it, without the loss of the least jot of their liberty, or puffing him up, or setting him in any unlawful authority. Both eye and hand, and every other part of the body, are distinct members, yet so knit and joined together in the body, as they do their due service unto the eye, and each unto other in the whole, not confounding the order of nature, nor disturbing each other in the

work. The church hath like care to see that inviolable order and temper of the members in Christ's body duly preserved; the honour they give to one member, is not the dishonour of another, or hindrance of the whole body. The church neither doth, neither may, give immoderate honour, either in fastuous [proud] swelling titles of vanity, or any inordinate authority to any member, that would rather puff up the flesh than cheer up the spirit. All the gifts God hath given any member, are to the service of the whole body; he that will be greatest must be as the least—he must wash the feet, and not have his feet kissed of the least; all superiority is here comprised within the bounds of Christian order and modesty. *Humility goeth before, and is the companion of honour; honour is not here conferred to lift up the hearts of the greatest above the least, but rather for their counsel, care, love, service unto all, it is willingly given unto such by all: ambition and vain glory are here carefully avoided, both by the givers and receivers; who so seeketh the primacy with Diotrephes is here suggillate [marked in the face] and laid open, resisted and rebuked of all (John iii. 9.), as that Antichrist, that Lucifer: the greatest elder of the church, the pastor, is but a servant and steward of the house, not lord of the heritage (Tit. i. 7; Pet. v. 3.), but a member, not lord of the body; to be honoured for his excellent place in the body and gifts of God; to be remembered for his faithfulness, labour, and diligence. Yet this must ever be remembered, his honour consisteth in his service, his service belongeth unto all; so that the least member of the body hath like interest in him, as he in the least member; the least member hath like liberty and freedom with him in Christ, though not like gifts or function of Christ.'*

"There is no power given the prince to restrain any jot or liberty and power of the church, or to withhold any one person from doing the whole will of God in their calling; much less is there any power given the prince to draw or compel the church, or any member thereof, to the least transgression or error; yea, when the prince shall in anything be found contrary to God, God is then to be obeyed rather than man. When the prince suffereth not the Word of

God to have free passage, he sinneth and doth not his duty. But this can be no excuse for us to cease to do the will of God, or to intermit our duty. If he draw the sword and smite us for well doing, that but augmenteth his sin, and the blessing of God resteth upon us that suffer for righteousness' sake. We may not, for fear of persecution, or for the indignation of princes, leave the commandment of God undone."

"No prince, neither all the men of the world, nor the church itself, can make any laws for the church other than Christ hath left in His Word."

That none might mistake their aims, immediate or ulterior, they gave the following explicit statement of them:—

"I. We seek above all things the peace and protection of the most High, and the kingdom of Christ Jesus our Lord.

"II. We seek and fully purpose to worship God aright, according as He hath commanded in His most Holy Word.

"III. We seek the fellowship of His faithful and obedient servants, and together with them to enter covenant with the Lord, and, by the direction of His Holy Spirit, to proceed to a godly, free, and right choice of ministers and other officers by Him ordained to the service of His church.

"IV. We seek to establish and obey the ordinances and laws of our Saviour Christ, left by His last Will and Testament to the governing and guiding of His church, without altering, changing, innovating, wresting, or leaving out any of them that the Lord shall give us sight of.

"V. We purpose (by the assistance of the Holy Ghost) in this faith and order to lead our lives, *and for this faith and order to leave our lives*, if such be the good will of our heavenly Father, to whom be honour and glory. Amen."

The noble frankness of Barrowe and Greenwood on all points saved them from embarrassing complications. They conceded too much rather than too little to the royal prerogative, and strangely admitted that the Sovereign might compel his subjects to attend public worship, though he had no power to coerce their faith. They knew that during their imprisonment the Spanish armada was prowling around the coasts of Eng-

land, and that the Papal forces were combined to extinguish the last spark of European liberty, and they would utter no sentiment that might diminish, in the slightest degree, the loyalty of the people to Elizabeth. It was rather their aim to strengthen their countrymen in the arduous struggle, by the inculcation of principles that would render them firm and invincible in all contingencies.

There was no prospect, however, that, with all their constancy and devotedness, they would live to witness any marked success.

What could a small company of persons, "sick and in prison," hope to effect against a powerful court, a learned hierarchy, and the prevailing sentiments of the age? With truth, they said, "*We dissent from all our nation* in some doctrines concerning the true worship, offices, officers, and government of God in His church."

Yet in all this obscurity, weakness, and depression, the principles for which they had suffered the loss of all things continually advanced. Earnest Christian people, and amongst them a few Puritan ministers, in various parts of the country, took long journeys to confer with Barrowe and Greenwood in prison; and though the church in London was unsettled, waiting for more complete organization, the members continued to meet. At one time they were too numerous, as prisoners, in Bridewell to be separated, and we find them not only assembling for worship, but also to receive candidates for communion, and to enforce church discipline.

At the time of the greatest weakness and of greatest discomfort, God was preparing the minds of two eminent Puritan leaders, who had hitherto been decidedly opposed, cordially to adopt their views, and to become identified with their cause.

Their case is so remarkable that we must revert briefly to the circumstances of their previous history.

FRANCIS JOHNSON, the son of the Mayor of Richmond, in Yorkshire, was born in 1562. The great object of his father was to provide for him and his brother George the best educa-

tion that could be secured. Both were sent to Cambridge. Francis became a Fellow of Christ's College, and as student and preacher rose to considerable eminence. He adopted the views of the Puritans, and for maintaining them in a sermon preached at St. Mary's Church, in 1588, he was convened before the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Nevil, and the heads of the colleges, and committed to prison. After suffering severe privations in close confinement, he was brought up for re-examination, October 19, 1589, and required to make public recantation, in the pulpit of St. Mary's Church, on the following Sabbath. To appease the anger of the university authorities he made an apology, but "in mincing terms, and did not fully revoke his opinions." On the 30th of October the sentence of expulsion was pronounced against him, and because he did not quit the university he was again thrown into prison on the 18th of December. Much sympathy was awakened in his favour. Sixty-eight scholars of the university united in an appeal, December 23, 1589, on his behalf to Lord Burleigh; but Whitgift was in the ascendant, and remonstrance had no effect. He retired to Middleburg, the capital of Zeeland, about six miles from Flushing. The introduction of the English army into the states of Holland prepared a refuge for Puritan exiles, and the means for securing religious liberty, far beyond the intention of Elizabeth or the wisest of her statesmen. The Queen had no settled policy in favour of freedom. She welcomed the refugees driven from the Low Countries by the persecutions of Alva; but in the early part of her reign some of them were burnt at the stake because of their religious opinions. At the instance of the bishops, who were jealous of the influence exerted by the settlers of the Geneva school, as well as to conciliate the papal party on the Continent, she denied the refugees further hospitality, and drove them back into the very teeth of their relentless oppressors. The courage of desperation inspired them to make the stand that rendered their alliance important for the safety of England. Elizabeth practised, in her negotiations with them, the most shameful duplicity. She would have bartered the liberties of Holland

for a sum that might reimburse the outlay in the support of English troops. Walsingham, having in mind the course of his royal mistress, said to the deputies of the Netherland churches, "Great princes are not so zealous in religious matters as they might be. Political transactions move them more deeply, and they depend too much on worldly things." He had abundant reason to make the observation. The persevering attempt of the King of Spain to subjugate England, and to recover the possession of Holland, compelled Elizabeth, notwithstanding her parsimony, to send troops in aid of the Dutch. Leicester, the commander-in-chief, was the great patron of the Puritans, and many of them found a sphere of ministerial usefulness as chaplains, or in the towns containing English residents. At Middleburgh the merchants of the staple were permitted to occupy the Gasthuis Kerk, and the congregation of Browne and Harrison had the Visch Markt Church assigned to them. Cartwright and Fenner ministered in succession to the merchants and their families. At the death of Fenner, in 1589, Francis Johnson was invited to accept the charge, and means were provided for his comfortable support. Here he might have remained but for an occurrence in connection with the printing of one of Barrowe's books, as unexpected as it was remarkable.

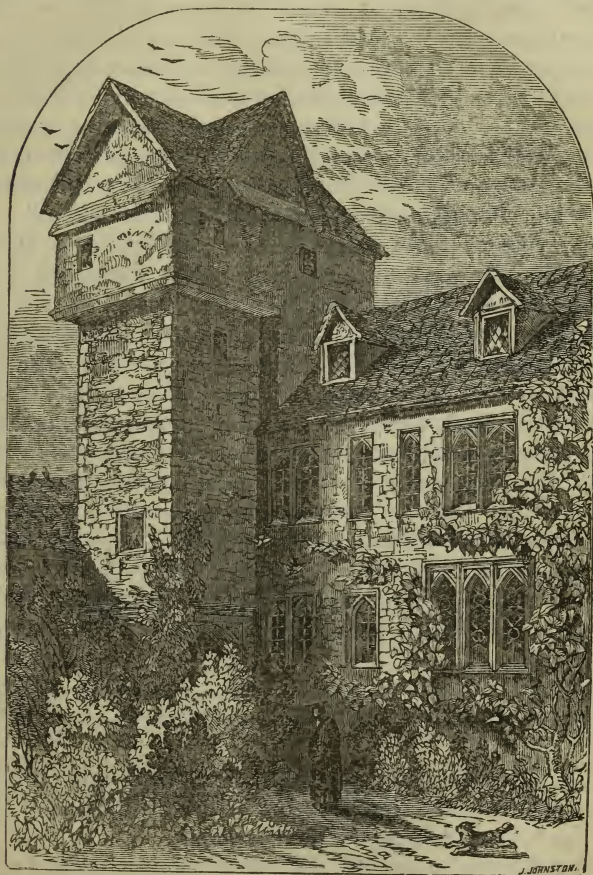
The Dutch authorities had far more interest in the cause of religious liberty than the English commander. The States General, in 1587, said, "They respected the difference in religious opinions, and, leaving all churches in freedom, they chose to compel no man's conscience." Under the influence of these enlightened views, they suffered the establishment of the printing press in different cities, from which the imprisoned Separatists and others might send out the declaration of their principles. The advantage gained to the cause of freedom by their earnest and vigorous publications can scarcely be overestimated. The Anglican prelates were extremely vigilant to prevent this printing work of the Separatists, and the Puritan party were not unwilling to afford their co-operation. Francis Johnson lent his services for this unworthy purpose. The

story is best told in the quaint manner of the Pilgrims, as given in Bradford's dialogue :—

“ When [in 1591] Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood's refutation of Giffard was privately in printing in this city [Middleburgh], he not only was a means to discover it, but was made the ambassador's instrument to intercept them at the press, and see them burnt; the which charge he did so well perform, as he let them go on until they were wholly finished, and then surprised the whole impression, not suffering any to escape; and then, by the magistrate's authority, caused them all to be openly burnt, himself standing by until they were all consumed to ashes. Only he took up two of them, one to keep in his own study that he might see their errors, and the other to bestow on a special friend for the like use. But mark the sequel. When he had done this work he went home, and being set down in his study, he began to turn over some pages of this book, and superficially to read some things here and there, as his fancy led him. At length he met with something that began to work upon his spirit, which so wrought with him as drew him to this resolution, seriously to read over the whole book; the which he did once and again. *In the end he was so taken, and his conscience was troubled so, as he could have no rest in himself until he crossed the seas and came to London to confer with the authors, who were then in prison. . . . After which conference he was so satisfied and confirmed in the truth,* as he never returned to his place any more at Middleburgh, but adjoined himself to their society at London. . . . and afterwards coming to live at Amsterdam, he caused the same books, which he had been an instrument to burn, to be new printed and set out at his own charge. And some of us here present testify this to be a true relation, *which we heard from his own mouth before many witnesses.*”

JOHN PENRY, M.A., was born at Cefnbrith, in the parish of Llangamarch, Breconshire, in 1559. The home in which he spent his childhood, called the *Old Grove*, is still standing. At nineteen years of age he was sent by his parents to the University of Cambridge, and admitted to Peterhouse as an under-

sizer. In 1586 he went to Oxford, where he entered at St. Alban's Hall, and soon became a famous university preacher.



ST. ALBAN'S HALL.

The grand object of his life, after his conversion, was to promote the evangelization of Wales. The petitions to parliament, and various treatises he wrote on this subject, in a strain of the most fervid eloquence, exposed him to the dire hostility

of the bishops. He was compelled to take refuge in Scotland. The Presbyterian ministers of the kirk welcomed him as one who held their own views, and had kept many from the verge of Brownism. He "taught publicly" in the church, though without parochial charge, and occupied his leisure in writing a treatise to show that reformation was no enemy to the State. The General Assembly for 1590 agreed on the following as one of the acts: "It is ordained that the brethren recommend to God, in their public and private supplications, the afflicted brethren in England, for the confession of the purity of religion."

The report of their proceedings greatly incensed Queen Elizabeth. She wrote an autograph letter, dated 6th July, 1590, to James, King of Scotland, expressing the utmost indignation. "I pray you stop the mouths," says the offended head of the Anglican church, "or make shorter the tongues of such ministers as dare to make oraison in their pulpits for the persecuted in England for the gospel. Suppose you, my dear brother, that I can tolerate such scandals of my sincere government? No. I hope, howsoever you be pleased to bear with their audacity towards yourself, yet you will not suffer a strange king receive that indignity at such caterpillars' hand, that instead of fruit I am afraid will stuff your realm with venom.... Give no more harbour room to vagabond traitors and seditious inventors, but return them to me, or banish them your land."

The Privy Council issued a warrant, signed by Whitgift and five others, for the apprehension of Penry as an "enemy to the State."

Failing to secure their intended victim, the English ambassador was directed to urge the court of Scotland either to seize Penry or to drive him across the border.

A decree* was passed on the 6th of August, 1590, for the banishment of Penry, within ten days, on the pain of death.

* "Apud Edinburgh, sexto die mensis Augusti, anno domini millesimo quingentesimo nonagesimo.

"The Kingis Majestie with advise of the Lordis of his secreit counsaill. For certane causes and considerationis moving yame ordains lettrez to

Notwithstanding the royal mandate, Penry was still sheltered beneath the shadow of the mountains. The ministers prevented, as far as possible, the proclamation, and though proscribed by the rulers of both kingdoms, the earnest Puritan reformer continued to write his thoughts on the one theme, which, under all circumstances, absorbed his attention. He resolved to leave his hiding place, and come from Scotland to London, with the view of presenting an address to the Queen in person, if an opportunity should be given. In the course of his journey he visited Mr. Ireton, six miles from Derby; Mr. Godley, his father-in-law, at Northampton; and Mr. John Clarke, the mayor of St. Albans.

He entered the City of London in September, 1592, and from the first day of his arrival devoted himself to the interests of the persecuted Christians associated with Barrowe and Greenwood. What passed in the conferences of Johnson and Penry with these faithful brethren, to whom they were once, as we have seen, conscientiously opposed, we cannot know; but from that time they were of one mind, and alike ready not only to suffer

be direct to officiaris of armes seffis in yai parte, chargeing thame to pas and in his hienes name and auctoritie command and charge Johnne Pennerie inglishman be oppin proclamatioun at ye mercatt croceis of ye heid burrowes of yis realme and utheris placeis needfull To depairt and pas furth of yis realme boundis and dominionis yairof within Ten dayis nixt efter he be chargeit yreto. And on nawise to returne agane yairin nor within any parte of ye same without speciall license of his majestie had and obtenit yreto under the pain of deid. Certifeing him and he failzie, ye said space being bipast, he salbe apprehendit and punist yrefore to ye deid with all rigour and extremitie. And siclike to command and charge all and sindrie his hienes legis off quhat estate degree or qualitie yat evir thay be of, that nane of yame tak uponn hand ye said space being bipast to ressett supplee or intercommoun with ye said Johnne Pennerie, or furneis him meit drink house or harborie under quhatsomevir cullour or pretens under ye said pane of deid. Certifeing thame and they failzie or do in the contrair, that yai sall als wa be persewit and punist with ye like rigour and extremitie to ye deid, in example of utheris. Extractum de libro actorum secreti consillii S. D. N. regis per me Joannem Andro clericum deputatum ejusdem sub meis signo et subscriptione manualibus.

JOANNES ANDRO."

bonds, but also to die for the truth the "Lord had revealed to them."

The course of Penry had differed in many respects from that of Barrowe and Greenwood. During the time they had been occupied in the discussion of questions of ecclesiastical polity he had laboured incessantly in the work of evangelization, and in efforts to secure greater moral purity in the ministers of the gospel. The main object he had in coming to London was for its advancement. He had fully adopted the principles of the Separatists, however, and wrote a manuscript treatise for circulation amongst them, on "The History of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram," to prove that truth was not treason. How completely he had become identified with his former opponents is evident from the following passage: "If her Majesty and this high court require of us that we resort unto the public assemblies of the land, and so to enter into the Antichristian band, and continue therein, I answer that this is against the written word of God; and, therefore, that her Majesty hath no power, no authority from the Lord, to require this at our hands. We are punished for it. We answer again, that the sword is given for our health, and not for our hurt; that it ought not to be drawn against us for well doing; yet we patiently and quietly bear the stroke. *Although we, for our parts, know ourselves bound, even in nature, to pacify the hard dealings of our prince and country towards us, by suffering and bearing of their injuries as we do our parents, that yet the Lord God, who judgeth without respect of persons, is an avenger of all such.* Christ Jesus, being the head of His church, hath all fulness of power, pre-eminence, and authority, dwelling in Himself, in such sort as *His body and spouse is no more to submit herself unto the power of another head, than to receive the false doctrines and false sacraments of some other religion or God."*

IX.

ROGER RIPPON,

AND

The Church in Southwark.

“ Their church—the unperturbed Gospel’s seat;
In their afflictions a divine retreat;
Source of their noblest hope, and tenderest prayers,
The truth exploring with an equal mind.”

WORDSWORTH.

IN the autumn of 1592, the Separatists enjoyed a brief season of rest. There was a lull in the storm of persecution. JOHN GREENWOOD was transferred from the Fleet prison to the charge of a private citizen, who was responsible to the authorities for his appearance before them when required. ROGER RIPPON had extended to him the same relief, and was permitted to have “the liberty of the house.” We have no information as to the mitigation of the rigour with which Barrowe had been treated, but probably he, with his companion in bonds, experienced some alleviation. The interval of comparative quiet was improved for the complete organization of the church, an object they had sought to accomplish for five years. Francis Johnson and John Penry, with other brethren, conferred with Barrowe and Greenwood. We have no more record of what passed between them than we find respecting the meeting of the brethren at Appii Forum, but we may be assured, like the primitive Christians in their conference with the apostle, they “thanked God and took courage.”

In its unsettled state, the Christian society, though deprived of pastors and teachers, met periodically for worship and mutual edification in various places. Notwithstanding the penalties to which they were exposed for holding "conventicles," several of the brethren were willing to open their houses for religious service.

The house of Roger Rippon, in Southwark, appears to have been a *central station*. Mr. Bilson, in Christchurch, Southwark; George Johnson, in Nicolas Lane; John Barnes, near Bartholomew's Hospital; and Robert Badkyne, in Gray's Inn Lane, were included in the plan for accommodating the people in their Sabbath meetings. For open air services they resorted to the St. George's Fields and to the woodsides of Deptford and of Islington. The time and place for the "next meeting" was announced to the congregation at the "end of the Sabbath." *They had amongst them a staff of preachers.* John Smyth, James Forrester, Thomas Settle, Mr. Collins and Mr. Stanhope, are mentioned with others.

Their mission extended to the provinces. John Delamere, in his examination before the justices, said he heard Mr. Smyth and others in Somersetshire. Abraham Pulvay was taken prisoner as a "suspected Brownist" in Arundel. William Smith came to join them from Bradford, in Wiltshire; and Penry speaks of "the brethren in the west and north countries."

The order and spirit of their meetings we learn from answers given in their examination before the justices. Clement Campbell "confessed":—"In the summer time they met together in the fields, a mile or more about London. There they sat down upon a bank, and divers of them expounded out of the Bible so long as they are there assembled."

"In the winter time they assembled themselves by five of the clock in the morning to that house where they made their conventicle for that Sabbath day, men and women together; there they continue in their kind of prayers and exposition of scriptures all the day. They dine together; after dinner they make a collection for their diet, and what money is left some

of them carrieth to the prison where any of their sort be committed."

It was "confessed" by John Dove that "in their prayer one speaketh, and the rest do groan, or sob, or sigh, as if they would wring out tears, but say not after him that prayeth. Their prayer is extemporal."

They had *weekly offerings* for the support of the ministry. William Mason, a shipwright, and one of their number, in answer to a question from the magistrates, said, "he gave to the deacons sixpence a week when he had money."

All were carefully instructed as to the constitution, offices, and design of a Christian church. A document was printed in 1589, and freely circulated amongst them, entitled, "A true Description out of the Word of God of the Visible Church." We cite its contents:—

As there is but one God and Father of all, one Lord over all, and one Spirit; so there is but one Truth, one Faith, one Salvation, one Church, called in one Hope, joined in one profession, guided by one rule, even the Word of the Most High.

THIS CHURCH, as it is universally understood, containeth in it all the elect of God that have been, are, or shall be; but being considered more particularly as it is seen in this present world, it consisteth of a company and fellowship of faithful and holy people, gathered in the name of Christ Jesus, their only King, Priest, and Prophet; worshiping Him aright, being peaceably and quietly governed by His offices and laws, keeping the unity of the faith in the bond of peace, and love unfeigned.

To this society are the covenant and all the promises made, of peace, of love, and of salvation; of the presence of God, of his graces, of his power, and of his protection.

And, surely, if this church be considered in her parts, she shall appear most beautiful, yea, most wonderful, and even ravishing the senses to conceive, much more to behold; what then, to enjoy so blessed a communion? For behold, her king and Lord is the king of peace, and Lord himself of all glory. She enjoyeth most holy and heavenly laws, most faithful and vigilant pastors, most sincere and pure teachers, most careful and upright governors, most diligent and trusty deacons, most loving and sober relievers, and a most humble, meek, obedient, faithful, and loving people; every stone living, elect, and precious; every stone hath his *beauty*, his *burden*, and his *order*, all bound to edify one another, exhort reprove, and comfort one another, lovingly as to their own members, faithfully as in the eyes of God.

No office here is ambitiously affected; no law wrongly wrested or wilfully neglected; no truth hid or perverted; every one here hath freedom and power, not disturbing the peaceable order of the church, to utter his complaints and griefs, and freely to reprove the transgression and errors of any, without exception of persons.

Here is no intrusion or climbing up another way into the sheepfold than by the holy and free election of the Lord's holy and free people, and, according to the Lord's ordinances, humbling themselves by fasting and prayers, in which action the apostles used laying on of hands. Thus hath every one of the people interest in the election and ordination of their officers, as also in the administration of offices, upon the transgression, abuse, &c., having an especial care unto the inviolable order of the church as is aforesaid.

Likewise, in this church, they have holy laws, as limits and bonds, which it is lawful at no hand to transgress; they have laws to direct them in the choice of every office what kind of men the Lord will have. Their *Pastor* must be apt to teach; no young scholar; able to divide the word aright; holding fast that faithful word, according to doctrine, that he may be able also to exhort, reprove, improve, with wholesome doctrine, and to convince them that say against it. He must be a man that loveth goodness; he must be wise, righteous, holy, temperate; he must be of life unreprouable, as God's steward; he must be generally well reported of, and one that ruleth his own household under obedience with all honesty; he must be modest, humble, meek, gentle, and loving; he must be a man of great patience, compassion, labour, and diligence; he must always be careful and watchful over the flock, whereof the Lord hath made him overseer, with all willingness and cheerfulness, not holding his office in respect of persons, but doing his duty to every soul, as he will answer before the Chief Shepherd.

Their *Doctor* or *Teacher* must be a man apt to teach, able to divide the Word of God aright, and to deliver sound and wholesome doctrine from the same; still building upon that sound groundwork, he must be mighty in the scriptures, able to convince the gainsayers, and careful to deliver his doctrine pure, sound, and plain, not with curiosity or affectation, but so that it may edify the most simple, approving it to every man's conscience; he must be of life unreprouable, one that can govern his own household; he must be of manners, sober, temperate, modest, gentle, and loving.

Their *Elders* must be of wisdom and judgment, endued with the Spirit of God, able to discern between cause and cause, between plea and plea, and accordingly to prevent and redress evils; always vigilant and superintending, to see the statutes, ordinances, and laws of God kept in the church, not only by the people in obedience, but to see the officers do their duties. These men must be of life likewise unreprouable, governing their own families orderly; they must be also of manners sober, gentle, modest, loving, temperate, &c.

Their *Deacons* must be men of honest report, having the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, endued with the Holy Ghost; they must be grave, temperate, not given to excess, nor to filthy lucre.

Their *Relievers* or *Widows*, must be women of sixty years of age at the least, for avoiding of inconveniences; they must be well reported of for good works, such as have nourished their children, such as have been harbourers to strangers, diligent and serviceable to the saints, compassionate and helpful to them in adversity, given to every good work, continuing in supplications and prayers night and day.

These officers must first be duly proved, then, if they be found blameless, administer, &c.

Now, as the persons, gifts, conditions, manners, life, and proof of these officers, are set down by the Holy Ghost, so are their offices limited, severed, and divers.

Their Pastor's office is to feed the sheep of Christ in green and wholesome pastures of his Word, and lead them to the still waters, even to the pure fountain and river of life.

He must guide and keep those sheep by that heavenly shephook and pastoral staff of the Word, thereby drawing them to Him, thereby discerning their diseases, and thereby curing them, applying to every disease a fit and convenient medicine; and, according to the quality and danger of the disease, give warning to the church that they may orderly proceed to excommunication; further, he must by this his shephook, watch over and defend his flock from ravenous beasts, and the "wolf," and take the "little foxes."

The Doctor's office is already set down in his description. His special care must be to build upon the only true groundwork—gold, silver, and precious stones, that his work may endure the trial of the fire, and by the light of the same fire, reveal the timber, hay, and stubble of false teachers. He must take diligent heed to keep the church from errors; and, further, he must deliver his doctrine so plainly, simply, and purely, that the church may increase with the increase of God, and grow up unto Him which is the Head, Jesus Christ.

The office of the Ancients is expressed in their description; their special care must be to see the ordinances of God truly taught and practised, as well by the officers in doing their duty uprightly, as to see that the people obey willingly and readily. It is their duty to *see the congregation holily and quietly ordered, and no way disturbed by the contentious and disobedient, froward, and obstinate*; not taking away the liberty of the least, but upholding the right of all, wisely judging of times and circumstances. They must be ready assistants to the pastors and teachers, helping to bear their burden, but not intruding into their office.

The Deacon's office is faithfully to gather and collect, by the ordinance of the church, the goods and benevolence of the faithful; and, by the same direction, diligently and trustily to distribute them according to the

necessity of the saints. Further, *they must inquire and consider of the proportion of the wants, both of the officers and the poor, and accordingly relate unto the church, that provision may be made.*

The Reliever's and Widow's office is to minister to the sick, lame, weary, and diseased, such helpful comforts as they need, by watching, tending, and helping them. Further, they must show good example to the younger women, in sober, modest, and godly conversation; avoiding idleness, vain talk, and light behaviour.

These officers, *though they be divers and several, yet are they not severed, lest there should be a division in the body, but they are as members of the body, having the same care one of another*; jointly doing their several duties to the service of the saints, and to the edification of the body of Christ, till all meet together in the perfect measure of the fulness of Christ, by whom, all the body being, in the meanwhile, thus coupled and knit together by every joint for the furniture thereof, according to the effectual power which is in the measure of every part, receiveth increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love; neither can any of these offices be wanting, without grievous lameness, and apparent deformity of the body, yea, violent injury to the Head, Christ Jesus.

Thus this holy army of saints is marshalled here in earth by these officers, under the conduct of their glorious Emperor, Christ, that victorious Michael; thus, it marcheth, in this most heavenly order and gracious array, against all enemies, both bodily and ghostly; *peaceable in itself, as Jerusalem; terrible to the enemy as an army with banners, triumphing over their tyranny with patience, their cruelty with meekness, and over death itself with dying.*

Thus, through the blood of that Spotless Lamb, and that Word of their Testimony, they are more than conquerors, bruising the head of the serpent; yea, through the power of His word, they have the power to cast down Satan like lightning, to tread upon serpents and scorpions, to cast down strongholds, and everything that exalteth itself against God; the gates of hell, and all the principalities and powers of the world, shall not prevail against it.

Further, He hath given them the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that whatsoever they bind in earth, by His Word, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

Now this power which Christ hath given unto His church, and to every member of His church, to keep it in order, He hath not left it to their discretion and lusts, to be used or neglected as they will, but in His last Will and Testament He hath set down both an order of proceeding and an end to which it is used.

If the fault be private, holy and loving admonition and reproof are to be used, with an inward desire and earnest care to win their brother; but if he will not hear, yet to take two or three other brethren with him, whom he knoweth most meet for that purpose, that by the mouth of two

or three witnesses every word may be confirmed; and if he refuse to hear them, then to declare the matter to the church, which ought severely and sharply to reprehend, and gravely to admonish, and lovingly to persuade, the party offending, showing him the heinousness of his offence, and the danger of his obstinacy, and the fearful judgments of the Lord.

All this, notwithstanding, the church is not to hold him as an enemy, but to admonish him, and pray for him as a brother, proving if, at any time, the Lord will give him repentance, for this power is not given them to the destruction of any, but to the edification of all.

If this prevail not to draw him to repentance, then are they, in the name and power of the Lord Jesus, with the whole congregation, reverently, in prayer, to proceed to excommunication; that is, unto the casting him out of their congregation and fellowship, covenant and protection of the Lord, for his disobedience and obstinacy, and committing him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, if such be his good will and pleasure.

Further, they are to warn the whole congregation, and all other faithful, to hold him as a heathen and publican, and to abstain themselves from his society, as not to eat or drink with him, &c., unless it be such as of necessity must needs, as his wife, his children, and family; yet these, if they be members of the church, are not to join to him in any spiritual exercises.

If the offence be public, the party is publicly to be reprov'd and admonish'd; if he then repent not, to proceed to excommunication, as aforesaid. The repentance of the party must be proportionate to the offence, namely, if the offence be public, public; if private, private; humbled, submissive, sorrowful, unfeigned, giving glory to the Lord. *

There must great care be had of admonitions, that they be not captious, or curious, finding fault where none is, neither yet in bitterness or reproach, for that were to destroy and not to save our brother; but they must be carefully done, with prayer going before; they must be seasoned with truth, gravity, love, and peace.

Moreover, in this church is an especial care had, by every member thereof, of offences. The strong ought not to offend the weak, nor the weak to judge the strong, but all graces here are given to the service and edification of each other in love and long suffering.

In this CHURCH is the truth purely taught, and surely kept; here are the covenant, the sacraments, and promises, the graces, the glory, the presence, the worship of God, &c.

Into this temple entereth no unclean thing, neither whatsoever worketh abominations or lies, but they which are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. But "without" this CHURCH shall be dogs, and enchanters, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh lies.—1589.

At meetings of the church, held in Southwark and in Nicolas Lane, Francis Johnson was chosen pastor; John Greenwood, teacher; Daniel Studley and George Knyveton, elders. The ordinance of baptism was administered to children, and the members sat at the table, covered with a white cloth, to receive the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. It was intended to form a second church of the same faith and order, but their proceedings were reported to the bishops, and active measures were employed for their repression. Roger Rippon was again sent to Newgate, and died shortly after of the prison plague. At a time of great excitement some of his fellow prisoners prepared an inscription for his coffin, reciting the acts of cruelty that had been practised upon them. The funeral procession, amid a crowd of sympathisers, halted at the door of Mr. Justice Young. This incident increased the hostility of their oppressors. Bancroft intercepted their letters, and prepared his plans to effect if possible their speedy extinction. "These new upstarts," he says, "begin to erect, in divers places, their Barrowish synagogues, and I know not what cages of frantic schismatics. They go on forward headlong—God knows whither. I am persuaded that, if there be not good order taken in this behalf, there will be some mischief grow of it. The number of them doth increase daily more and more. And for the repressing of them it will not be sufficient (in mine opinion) to use the ordinary course by the ecclesiastical censures or commission. There are two especial points for the which we dislike them—their departing from our churches, and the framing to themselves a church of their own. I say again, and again, that if good order be not taken, this schism will daily increase and grow to be dangerous."

The bishops resolved on a *coup de main*. Presuming on their influence at court, they sent their pursuivants at midnight, on the 5th of December, 1592, to seize Francis Johnson and John Greenwood, and convey them at once to prison, regardless of the forms of law. These violent proceedings called forth the following earnest and eloquent appeal to the Privy Council:—

“ To the Right Honourable the Lords and others of Her Majesty’s Most Honourable Privy Council.

“ Your honours’ venerable authority, gravity, and wisdom, assembled in this high place of council for the redress of abuses, for the godly and peaceable government of this land, under her most excellent Majesty, giveth to her poor oppressed subjects boldness, yet in all humility, to expose before your honours our most lamentable usage and distressed estate, whose entire faith unto God, loyalty to the sovereign, obedience to governors, reverence to our superiors, innocency in all good conversation towards all men, cannot avail us for the safety of our lives, liberty, or goods, not even by her Highnesses royal laws, and the public charters of this land, from the violence and invasion of our adversaries, her Majesty’s subjects. Whose dealing with us your honours shall further understand, when we have briefly declared the true cause thereof unto you, which is this : her Highness, publishing the Holy Scriptures, and exhorting all her subjects to the diligent reading and sincere obedience thereof in all their callings, we thereby, upon due examination and assured proof, find the whole public ministry, ministration, worship, government, obediences, and proceedings ecclesiastical of this land, by authority established, to be strange, *and quite dissenting from the rules of Christ’s Testament, not to belong unto, or to have any place or use, or so much as mention in His church,* but rather to belong unto, and to be delivered from, the malignant synagogue of Antichrist, being the selfsame that the Pope used and left in this land ; wherefore we dare not by any means defile or submit ourselves in any outward subjection or inward consent thereunto, both in regard of the whole first table of God’s law to the contrary, and of the wrath denounced (Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11, and xviii. 4). Again, we, by the Holy Scriptures, *find God’s absolute commandment, that all which bear and believe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ should forthwith thereupon forsake their evil walk, and from thenceforth walk in Christ’s holy faith and order, together with His faithful servants,* subjecting themselves to the ministry, those holy laws and ordinances which the Lord Jesus hath appointed,

and whereby He is only present and reigneth in His church. Wherefore, both for the enjoying of that inestimable comfort of His joyful presence and protection, and to show *our obedience to God's holy commandment, we have, in his reverent fear and love, drawn and joined ourselves together, in that Christian faith, order, and communion, prescribed in His Word, and subjected our souls and bodies to those holy laws and ordinances which the Son of God hath instituted, and whereby He is present, and ruleth His church here beneath, and have chosen to ourselves such a ministry of Pastor, Teacher, Elders, Deacons, as Christ hath given to His church here on earth to the world's end, intending, through the promised assistance of God's grace (notwithstanding any prohibition of man, or what by man can be done unto us), according to God's holy commandment, to worship Him aright, and to frame all our proceedings according to the prescript of His word, and to lead our lives in holiness and righteousness before Him in all dutiful obedience and humble subjection to our magistrates and governors set over us by the Lord.*

“Our attempts in both these, as well in forsaking the one as endeavouring the other, we undertake and are ready before your honours to prove against all men, as they are publicly avowed in the confession and practice of all foreign churches, so to be warranted by the Word of God, allowable by her Majesty's laws, no way prejudicial to her sovereign power, or offensive to the public peace of this state, nor injurious to the lawful authority and proceedings of any in the same, or without the limits of our own place and calling. *Likewise what we have done in our public proceedings, the same to have done in such Christian and peaceable manner, as no one of her Highnesses subjects hath cause to complain of injustice, molestation, or unquietness, done or intended to them in any manner of way.* Thus, Right Honourable, standeth our case in all truth and uprightness.

“It remaineth that you now hear a brief narration of our usage for the same by our adversaries.

“Our only special adversaries that find themselves offended thereat, are the officers of Antichrist's kingdom, namely, the Romish prelacy and priesthood left in this land, with such other their assistants as are made rich by the traffic of that see.

Their dealing with us is, and hath been a long time most infamous, outrageous, and lawless. By the great power and high authority they have gotten into their hands, and usurp above all the public courts, judges, laws, and charters of this land, persecuting, imprisoning, detaining at their pleasures our poor bodies without any trial, release, or bail permitted, yet, and hitherto, without any cause, either for error or crime directly objected, much less proved against any of us. Some of us they have now more than five years thus detained in prison; yea, four of these five years in close prison, with much miserable usage—as Henry Barrowe and John Greenwood, at this present in the Fleet; others they have cast into their limbo of Newgate, laden with as many irons as they could bear; others into the dungeons and loathsome gaol, amongst the most facinorous and vile persons, where it is lamentable to relate how many of these innocents have perished within these five years, and of these, some aged widows, aged men, young maidens, &c.—where so many as the infection hath spared shall be in woful distress, like to follow their fellows, if speedy redress be not had; others of us have been grievously beaten with cudgels in the prison, as at Bridewell, and cast into a place called *Little-Ease* there, for refusing to come to their chapel service, in which prison they (and others of us not long after) ended their lives. Upon none of us thus committed by them, dying in their prison, is any search or inquest suffered to pass, as by law in like case is provided, and to all others is done.

“Others of us, and those very aged men, they have a long time kept in the White Lyon, where they still remain without any trial, bail, or pity.

“Their manner of pursuing and apprehending us is with no less violence and outrage. Their pursuivants, with assistants, break into our houses at all hours of the night (for such times to these exploits they for the most part choose, to hide their unchristian and cruel dealing with us from the world); there they break up, ransack, rifle, and make havoc at their pleasures, under pretence of searching for seditious and unlawful books.” [Their prisoners they pluck out of beds to the alarm

of all in the house.] “About a month since [Dec. 5, 1592], their pursuivants, late in the night, entered in the Queen’s name into an honest citizen’s house, upon Ludgate Hill, where, after they had at their pleasures searched and ransacked all places, chests, &c., of the house, they there apprehended two of our ministers, Francis Johnson, without any warrant at all, and John Greenwood, both whom, between one and two of the clock after midnight, they, with bills and staves, led to the Counter of Wood Street, taking assurance of Edward Boyes, the owner of the house, until the next day, that he were sent for, at which time the archbishop, with certain doctors his associates, committed them all three to close prison, two unto the Clink, the third again to the Fleet, where they remain in great distress.

“Since this, they have cast into prison THOMAS SETTLE and DANIEL STUDLEY, lately taken in Nicolas Lane, upon a Lord’s day, in our assembly by Mr. Richard Young, and committed to prison, and *afterwards bailed by the Sheriff of London*, to be now again called for and committed close prisoner to the Gatehouse.

“Others of us they have in like manner prosecuted, and sent out their pursuivants to apprehend; so there is no safety to any of us in any place, no escaping their violent hands, or getting from them being taken, *not even by her Majesty’s royal courts and laws*, except your honours stretch forth your hands to our succour, now you have heard our cause and usage.

“It were long to relate unto your honours all their secret drifts and open practices, whereby they seek to draw us into danger and hatred, as by their subtle questions propounded, not having or knowing any matter to lay unto our charge—by their subornate conference, now almost three years since, sent into the prisons to well nigh sixty faithful Christians, whom they there, against all law, and without all cause, detained—by indicting us upon the statutes made for disloyal, idolatrous, recusant papists (whom yet, after thirty-three years’ obstinacy, they use not after this manner), though they know what we sincerely hold all the grounds of religion, published by harmony of confession, and never refused any wholesome doctrine or truth showed us in God’s word, but only

withstand such popish enormities as they bring in and urge contrary to the word of God—*by defaming and divulging as Anabaptists*, though they be not able to charge us with any one of their errors to our faces—as *Donatists* and schismatics, *though we have Christian communion with all that truly hold and walk in the Christian faith*, and though they will not by any means be drawn to approve their own ministry, ministration, worship, government, ordinances, and proceedings ecclesiastical, by the word of God—as *seditionous conventiclors*, though they be not able to detect us of any action done against the word of God, or against the laws of this land in our meeting, and though themselves by their tyranny drive us into these secret places and meetings—as *abridgers of and encroachers upon the royal power of the Queen*, though we from our hearts acknowledge her sovereign power, under God, over all persons, causes, actions, civil or ecclesiastical, within her Highnesses dominions; though we gladly obey, and never willingly break, any of her godly laws; though we never attempted either secretly or openly of ourselves to suppress or innovate anything, however enormous soever, by public authority established, but have always contained ourselves within the bound of our own calling, *Christianly refraining such things as God hath forbidden us to do, and endeavouring to do such things as Christ hath commanded His faithful servants in His holy worship, patiently suffering whatsoever the arm of injustice shall do unto us for the same, but always leaving the reformation of the State to those that God hath set to govern the State*—yet are we all accused as pernicious to the State and public peace of the land, though we endeavour nothing but the pure worship of God and sincere obedience to the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, within the limits of our calling; which, though this cannot be made to accord to their kingdom and works of darkness, yet we hope, in any Christian judgment, *they will not be found contrary or offensive to any godly government or well ordered commonwealth.*

“Likewise they very untruly suggest, that we, by our opinions and proceedings, utterly cut off and condemn her most excellent Majesty, and all others not of our mind, as infidels,

reprobates, &c., wherein they much wrong your honours and us. *God knoweth our reverent judgment, loyal hearts, and entire love to you all ; how we seek, desire, yea, and have hope of your salvation as our own.* We may reprove and forsake their unchristian ways and proceedings, which God in His word condemneth, yet not fall into such horrible presumption and uncharitable prejudice ; otherwise the holy prophets, apostles, and faithful men of all times, that have lived in the fear and spoken in the name of God, shall by their reason fall into the like condemnation.

“ But, Right Honourable, this dealing will not for ever uphold their ruinous kingdom, or (we hope and pray) long keep your honourable wisdoms from the sight and search of God’s truth in these matters, which, if it may please your honours but to permit to be tried with them, cannot longer be hid. We can but in all humble manner beseech, offer, and commit our cause and whole proceedings to be tried by the scriptures of God, with any that is of contrary or divers judgment, before your honourable presence, where we confidently undertake both to disprove their public ministry, ministration, worship, government, and proceedings ecclesiastical established, as they vaunt in this land ; and also to approve our own present course and practice, by such evidence of scripture as our adversaries shall not be able to withstand or gainsay, without denying the most substantial grounds of religion established by her Majesty.

“ Protesting if we fail herein, not only willingly to sustain such deserved punishment as shall be inflicted upon us for our disorder and temerity, but also to become conformable to their line and proceedings. If we overthrow not them, we will not say, if they overcome us.

“ Neither may your honours, without great charge deny, or any longer defer this Christian and peaceable course, prescribed and commanded of God in these causes, seeing it tendeth to the appeasing and ending great contentions already begun, and like to increase, to the satisfying many doubtful consciences, to the uniting and conforming our dissenting minds in the truth, to the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, of God’s pure worship, to the reformation of the great enormities and

impiety of this land, and to the calling of all men to the obedience of the gospel of Christ in their calling. As these things are esteemed and dear unto your honours, so we beseech that our petition herein may be regarded, and this course propounded assayed for the obtaining the same.

“Likewise, Right Honourable, in the meantime, we even, in the name of God and of our sovereign Queen, beseech you, for the present safety of our lives from our adversaries’ outrage and violence, the benefit and help of her Majesty’s laws, and of the public charter of this land (to the observation and preservation whereof your honours are sworn), namely, that we may be received unto bail until we be by order of law convict of some crime deserving bonds or this usage. We plight unto you our faith towards God, our allegiance to her Majesty and to your honours, that we will not commit anything willingly unworthy of the gospel of Christ, or to the disturbance of the common peace and good order of this land. Also that we will be readily forthcoming at such reasonable warning as your honours shall command. It standeth not with your honourable estimation or justice to suffer us to be thus oppressed or punished—yea, thus to perish before trial and judgment, especially imploring and crying out for the same unto you. We ask, Right Honourable, but justice and equity (which ought to be administered to the worst), and that for the safety of our lives. It were a most doleful and a woful charge to her Majesty, your honours, and this whole land (whereat the enemies of God and of her Majesty, at home and abroad, would greatly rejoice, but all the faithful wheresoever would sorrow and lament), if you should suffer any more of innocent blood to be spilt in this manner through your default, yea, now after this knowledge given and suit made, through your consent, by this malignant generation, which God put in your hearts to foresee and prevent.

“Howsoever, we here take the Lord of heaven and earth and his angels, together with your own consciences, and all persons in all ages to whom this our supplication may come, to witness that we have truly advertised your honours of our cause and usage; and have in all humility offered our cause

to Christian trial by the Scriptures, submitted our bodies to any judicial trial by the laws of this land—only craving upon our knees, in the meantime, the benefit of the laws unto bail for the safety of our lives. Now, if your honours shall neglect, you cannot from henceforth plead ignorance or be held guiltless. But all the innocent blood already shed by our adversaries, together with the sighs and cries of us, your oppressed suppliants, and the tears of our desolate wives and succourless children, shall incessantly, day and night, cry in the ears of our just Lord, and also rise in judgment against you in the day of accounts; and we shall be enforced to prefer our complaint, and appeal from you to our most gracious Sovereign, with whose pleasure or privity we are sure it standeth not that her innocent true hearted subjects, and Christ's faithful subjects, should be thus used, whose gracious reign God long continue over us in all prosperity, to the good of His church and her own everlasting felicity. God likewise bless your honours, and incline your hearts to commiserate and redress the lamentable usage of us your distressed suppliants, who from our hearts detest the heresies, schisms, false worship, unchristian devices, and whatever is repugnant to God's holy word, and endeavour to obey both our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sincerity of His glorious gospel, revealed in His word of truth, and our gracious Queen, your honours, and all lawful authority set over us in the Lord our God, to whom be glory, power, and dominion for ever. Amen."

*From the Clincks January 8
1593.*

Edmond more humble & suppliant

*Francis Johnson: Pastor of the poore
distracted Church of St. Dunstons
for the Sould of the Soulds.*

X.

BARROWE AND GREENWOOD,

THEIR

Indictment and Trial.

“ Our Fathers were high-minded men,
Who firmly kept the faith,
To freedom and to conscience true,
In danger and in death.”

THE founders of the Anglican establishment had no regard for liberty of conscience. Strictly speaking a state church can recognize no such freedom. When religion is enforced by the secular power, there can be no alternative but that of obedience or punishment. National law is not to be suspended according to the private feeling or judgment of the subject. It must be impartially enforced. Such was the view of the bishops and of the judges in the reign of Elizabeth. The appeals of Barrowe and of Greenwood to the word of God were all lost upon them. What had they to do with scripture when the statutes of the realm required submission to church authority? Their demands for conference and further investigation were deemed futile and impertinent. The Act of Uniformity settled every religious question for every person under her Majesty's government. Nevertheless, after the struggle of the Reformation it was not altogether desirable, in the face of Christendom, to rekindle the fires of Smithfield. The gibbet was substituted therefore for the stake, and separation from the national church

was treated not as heresy, but as treason, by an ingenious sort of logic to this effect: that since the Queen commanded such doctrines to be received, and such ceremonies to be observed, it was seditious to say anything that might tend to bring her authority into contempt. The Jews reasoned in the same manner with Pilate: "If thou let this man go," they said, "thou art not Cæsar's friend," and on this ground they demanded the suppression of the preaching of the apostles, "crying, these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another King, one Jesus."

We have been careful to produce the preceding memorials of the Separatists, in order that the reader might have a full opportunity to form an impartial judgment of their case. In view of what might be deemed their romantic loyalty to the Queen, with their distinct and disinterested renunciation of all claim to church property, and their earnest deprecation of everything like resistance by physical force, to any acts of oppression and injustice, it may now well become a point of curiosity how any formal indictment could be framed which should bring them within the power of a court of justice. In all their proceedings they were frank and unreserved. They concealed none of their principles, and no person could accuse them of any sinister design. They were compelled, indeed, to their regret, to meet in secret, but it was for no clandestine purpose. When the members of the church, who recanted from fear of the consequences, were asked what was the ulterior object of the party if they should greatly increase in number, they invariably answered that they had no intention to disturb the public peace, and only desired to obey the laws of Christ.

It may be admitted that modes of expression occur in these writings of the sixteenth century that would not be adopted in our own times. We flatter ourselves that after the improvement of three centuries greater amenity is found in polemical discussion. On matters of taste we may differ from these prison confessors. They speak, for example, of "a false church" with more abruptness than suits our modern ideas.

But in meaning, many writers, greatly esteemed amongst us, resemble them. Take, for example, the following passage from Vinet: "Let others speak of idle or indifferent errors, we cannot conceive them. No principle, whether true or false, slumbers. It may operate silently, or with *éclat*; it may gain ground slowly, or with rapidity, but from the period of its implantation in the mind, it can never remain inactive for a single instant. It is of no importance that it should be reduced to a system in order to work out its legitimate results; although it may not be methodically arranged, it will produce its consequences. It is as efficient, and perhaps more so, for being embodied in a fact, as for being exhibited in a sentence. Facts have a language. Now, what says this fact of the church, which is a society of conscience, being governed by the state, which is a society of interests? also, this fact, of an institution which recognizes no other truth than that which is necessary and useful, determining, nevertheless, what relates to *absolute* truth? Or this fact, of an institution, the characteristic of which is to restrain individuality, intruding itself into a sphere in which individuality triumphs, even within the limits that it prescribes to itself, and from the very circumstance of its having prescribed those limits? Or this fact, of a compulsory society directing the affairs of a voluntary society? And in one word, this fact, of matter governing mind? Is it to be believed that this fact will remain silent? No, it will speak; it will say that religion is a collective affair, which is *false*; that the community, as such, has a religion that spiritual interests are on the same footing as political interests, which is *false*; that religion and worship form a part of civil obligations, which is *false*; in short, as we have so frequently been told, that a man ought to follow the religion of his fathers, the religion of his country, the religion of the State; that it is always honourable to remain faithful to it, and disgraceful to abandon it, all which is *false, infinitely, shamefully false!*

"This idea, like a silent but inveterate disease, has made incredible ravages in the human conscience. Whilst it avoids menacing outward liberty, it inflicts deepest wounds on inward

liberty. It has taken away, not liberty alone, but, what is far better, the feeling and the love of liberty. It has weighed down consciences; it has attached, it has rooted them to the soil; it has made religion spring from the earth, and not from heaven; now, men are accustomed to receive it ready made from the very same hands which establish the police and levy the taxes; now, men do not believe in the word of God, or even in the church, as in the State; they have a religion because the State has one; were it to change its religion, they would change theirs also; nothing in their seared and stupified consciences would forewarn them of the change, or the difference; they would accept from it a new circumscription of truth as readily, and even more so, than a new circumscription of parishes; and as slavery debases men's minds until at length they love it, so they come at last to grow enthusiastic for this state of Helotism, in proportion as it grows older; and, making religion an affair of prescription, they grow sentimental about the religion of their forefathers, without so much as informing themselves what that religion was, or whether they had a religion!

“Shall we demand from consciences, we will not say sunk in degradation, but in slumbers, a frank declaration of their convictions? It is precisely convictions, true personal convictions, in which they are deficient. The crime of state churches is not so much preventing the profession, as preventing the formation of convictions; their crime is tacitly to deny both conscience and religion. Where, then, is our hope and our resource? It is to address ourselves to those who, under this *false* system, have yet preserved, by grace from on high, both their conviction and their conscience uninjured, but who, notwithstanding this, or perhaps on this very account, have not perceived the vice of the system.”

The Christian philosopher whose words we have just quoted, and who sleeps on the shores of the placid Leman, was anticipated in this view by the Separatist prisoners of the Clink on the banks of the Thames. Had Vinet lived in their day, with such opinions, he would no doubt have been hung!

But we must return to our story. In the spring of 1593 it was determined by the law officers of the crown to proceed against Barrowe and his associates. They were examined on three different occasions in March, 1592-3, before the Lord Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, and other functionaries, on the authorship of their prison writings. Barrowe, in his depositions, taken on the 11th March, 1592-3, said "that the book showed unto him, entitled 'A Declaration of certain Letters and Conferences lately passed between certain persons and two prisoners in the Fleet,' was *collected by him and John Greenwood, and sent forth by him*. At the time they were collected together, the said Mr. Greenwood and he were prisoners together *in one chamber*."

"He saith the *cause* why they were thus collected was to *testify* always to the world what was the truth of their speech and conference with those preachers."

"He confesseth that he hath seen the book entitled 'An Answer to G. Giffard,' &c., and hath read some part thereof, and saith he saw Mr. Greenwood when he was writing that book, who made this examinant acquainted with sundry parts thereof." Barrowe admitted the same cognizance of other books.

John Greenwood, in his examination on the same day, "confesseth that he knoweth the three several books showed him upon his examination, and that for such part of the several books as concerneth this examinant *was collected by this examinant, with which he made Barrowe acquainted*, and that which doth concern Henry Barrowe, the same Henry did collect and set down, which he (this examinant) saw, or saw part thereof, for that the same Barrowe and this examinant were there chamber fellows together at that time."

"He saith the *cause* why they so set the same down was that the Lord Chief Justice, and those in authority, might see what they held concerning the crimes wherewith they were charged."

"He saith that for himself, he had one of every sort after they were printed, and doth not well remember whether it was

Cicely there, this examinant's maid servant, that brought them to this examinant."

As the government did not provide the means of sustenance for these Christian prisoners, it was necessary that some of their friends should have access to them, so far at least as to bring the supply of daily food. Cicely, the domestic servant of Mrs. Greenwood, was a messenger for this purpose. Daniel Studley and Andrew Smyth (two of the brethren) had letters from the Archbishop to visit Barrowe. By means of these periodical visitors they found opportunity to convey their writings, sheet by sheet, for publication. Robert Stokes (who ultimately proved unfaithful, and was excommunicated by the church) furnished the money for the printer.

Robert Bowle undertook the charge of having the books printed. In his examination, taken the 19th of March, we find the following entry :—

"He saith that the book, entitled 'A Collection of certain Letters and Conferences lately passed between certain preachers and two prisoners in the Fleet,' this examinant caused to be printed at Dort, in the Low Countries, by the means of Robert Stokes.

"He saith Arthur Billot was the counter for the print of that book, and they were printed by one Hanse. There were above two or three hundred of them. He confesseth he brought these books from the press, which were put into the said Stokes his cloak bag. This examinant laid out the money for the printing thereof, which this examinant had by the means of the said Stokes."

By the agency of Daniel Studley and James Forrester, who were prisoners together at Bridewell, the books were put into circulation. So far the evidence as to the authorship and publication of these imputed libels was perfectly clear. Stokes and Forrester obtained their freedom by timely submission; the rest of the prisoners implicated, by their own confession, in the offence, were indicted for writing and publishing certain books, the tendency of which was "to cry down the Church of England, and to lessen the Queen's prerogative in matters

spiritual." They were tried at the Old Bailey under the 23rd of Elizabeth. They were indicted on the 21st of March, 1592-3. We are left without information as to the order of proceedings, which must have lasted two or three days. But the spirit of the prosecution we learn from the speech of one of the counsel, still extant in the original manuscript; and the evidence he produced in the case is also preserved.

Nothing could be more unfair than the statement of the case, and the disjointed extracts given from the books of Barrowe and Greenwood in its support; still prejudiced and unjust as are the contents of these documents, they are of the highest historical value, for they afford the most triumphant proof that there was nothing in these Christian confessors worthy of death or of bonds. It was the settled conviction of Barrowe and Greenwood that the Anglican church, as derived from the church of Rome, was part of the Antichrist mentioned in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, and that the denunciations recorded against the Apocalyptic "beast" and his "image" were applicable to the establishment whilst retaining Antichristian abominations. The subject of "Antichrist" was largely discussed in the time of the Reformation. If the "beast" represented the church of Rome, the brethren of the Second Reformation were satisfied that the Anglican church, as it resembled the papal church, must be the "*image of the beast.*" They were the more strengthened in this conviction when they were threatened with capital punishment for not attending the worship of the church; for it is said (Rev. xiii. 15), "*That the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*" In these prophetic interpretations they were liable to err, but until convinced by scriptural argument it was natural that they should speak according to their honest convictions. We shall see from the course taken in the prosecution that this doctrine respecting Antichrist was the gravamen of the charge against them. The speech to which we have referred is to the following effect:—

“May it please your Lordship. It appeareth, I trust, unto you, by Mr. Attorney’s speeches, into how factious and seditious a course these gentlemen have entered, notwithstanding all the laws and proclamations which her Majesty hath published for the staying of the same. Now, it followeth for me to open unto your lordship, as briefly as I may, and as the time will serve, some of the points which are chiefly insisted upon by the authors of these libels, that so the heinousness of their offence may the better appear unto you. Which duty I know I shall not perform as I ought to do, but because *not having myself much acquainted heretofore with these matters*, the very consideration of them doth greatly astonish me.

“There have been many which, since her Majesty’s reign, have sought, by lewd and seditious books, libels, and pamphlets, to slander the present state of the Church of England, and to bring the same into hatred with all the world—as Harding, Dorman, Martiall, Hopkins, Stapleton, Gregory, Martin, and Cardinal Allin—all of them shooting particularly at this mark, and to seduce unto them her Majesty’s subjects, by persuading of them that we have no lawful church in England, no bishops, no priests, no sacraments, no true service of God, no holy assemblies, no laws, no orders—briefly, no fear of God or salvation in the land; but that all is heretical, profane, wicked, antichristian, and diabolical.

“Against these men, if they were here, I knew well how to proceed, and should easily lay them open unto you to be rather monsters than men, enemies to their natural country, and most notorious and horrible traitors. But for the schismatic, disobedient persons and libellers, which of late years are risen amongst ourselves, I must confess I know not what to say, *because I find them in every coast*, much borne withal, and yet in their proceedings, as well by their own speeches as by their books and libels, in heaping all manner of slanderous calumniation upon the present estate of our church, even to the effect that the foresaid traitors have done, they come not one inch behind them, nay, truly, they go far before them.

“For in the (publishing) of these libels, and some other of their books, I do plainly perceive that they do bend their whole course generally to this end:—

“The utter ruin and overthrow of the present estate of the church; the abolishing of her Majesty’s most lawful supremacy in causes ecclesiastical; the suppression of our bishops in particular, and of their calling in general; the removing of that form of public prayer, as unlawful, which hitherto we have used for the service of God in our assemblies; the decay of the crown, by endeavouring to deprive the same of all the first fruits, tenths, and impropriations; and generally the abrogating of all good laws and ordinances, even as one class, which have been in making for the good government of this church above a thousand and four hundred years.

“Furthermore, remembering, belike, the principle of philosophy, *corruptio unius* is *generatio alterius*, their chief drift and end is this (if they can bring it to pass), the overthrow of the present estate of the church; to exert, forsooth, a new kind of government in the land, by such ecclesiastical senates in every parish as are termed by them presbyteries—a desire never heard of in this realm since first it received the doctrine of Christ, and is indeed nothing else but an idle conceit, consisting of pride, falsehood, and all manner of forgery, and tending to a more dangerous and confused tyranny than ever the pope’s was. That is:—

“That they themselves may sit at the helm, and rule the Church as they list.

“That every one of them may be a bishop, nay rather a pope, in his own parish.

“That they may teach us such forms of prayer in our churches as shall fall out every day to be agreeable to their humours.

“That they may make new laws and orders for the government of the churches, such as upon every occasion they shall think meet.

“That her Majesty’s first fruits, tenths, the livings of the

bishops and of cathedral churches, might be converted to the honourable supportation of their ecclesiastical senate.

“That they might correct, control, and bring every man’s neck to their yoke.

“And that they might suspend, interdict, excommunicate, and curse princes themselves within their own kingdoms.

“That these are the drifts, my lords, of all this faction, and of the libels I have to deal withal, for the obtaining of which their desires, I beseech you, observe the manner of their proceeding.

“They have written divers book to this purpose, which have been learnedly confuted. They have offered sundry supplications unto the high court of parliament to the purpose before mentioned, which, upon due consideration, have been rejected.

“And here you behold their course. They can neither prevail by learning, nor by petition, with those that are in authority; but they turn to the common people—they cast out their slanderous libels amongst them.

“They endeavour to bring her Majesty’s authority for reformation, the ministry and bishops, for order of service, and generally the whole platform of our religion, by all [impudency] and lying, into contempt with the people.

“They tell them that none ought to intermeddle with the government and causes of the church but the pastors, doctors, elders, and deacons, amongst themselves.

“They invite men to take the calling of the ministry upon them, not expecting the bishops ordaining of them.

“They blame her Majesty’s subjects for that they are no more forward to work this reformation (as they term it) of themselves.

“They threaten all men that do withstand them, accounting them to be either atheists or papists.

“They write most dishonourably of all the parliaments which have been holden since her Majesty’s reign.

“They are come to this boldness, that they vaunt and brag

how they are already to stand up for them in this cause at least a hundred thousand.*

“Lastly, as if all these courses would not serve their turns, and that therefore they had *combined themselves with the Spaniard*, they endeavour to terrify her Majesty’s subjects with a new invasion, giving a peremptory sentence, that if their platform may not be received, the Spaniards’ swords shall be drunk in our blood, and that we all, our wives, our children, even the whole realm, shall be destroyed.

“Now, my lords, that all these things are true which I have said unto you—notwithstanding I am persuaded there is none here that doubteth of them, considering how well these opinions are known, and how common these libels *have been even disposed through all parts of this realm*—yet I have thought good to note unto you, for your better satisfaction, some things out of every one of them, whereby in your wisdoms you may judge of the rest—and so to the parts of the books.”

It will at once occur to the reader, in the recollection of the papers of Barrowe and Greenwood, that there was not the shadow of foundation for the wicked insinuations contained in this forensic address. Was it possible for any man who knew the facts, to believe “that they had combined themselves with the Spaniard?” They correctly describe themselves as “a people who are found to be, and confessed to be, the most contrary in judgment, and greatest enemies to the pope’s supremacy, the seminaries; and all the brood of that apostate throne, with all their trumperies, and to the *King of Spain and all his treacheries*.”†

We dismiss, however, the rhetoric of the counsel to attend to the evidence. In this case it is all documentary. There are no personal witnesses, and in the identical paper used in the trial by the counsel we have the entire body of testimony. After all the inquisitorial visits of the Puritan visitors, and the frequent examinations before the justices, there remained only the following proofs to substantiate the charge. Mr. Sperin,

* In a petition.

† *Supra*, p. 94.

the Puritan minister, of Milk Street, in the City, seems to have been the most successful inquisitor.

The following are the memoranda of counsel containing the extracts to which he refers :—

“ IN THE INDICTMENT OF BARROWE.

Page 2. “ *Sperin* answered that he ever thought reverently of the bishops, both for their learning, as also because her Majesty hath authorized them.”

Barrowe. “ I showed their unlawful Antichristian ‘ beastlike ’ power and authority, as also their barbarous havoc they exercised in the church, confounding and subverting all good ordinances, and setting up their own devices instead thereof; and, therefore, they that reverence these men, call Christ execrable, and ‘ worship the beast.’ ”

Page 4. *Barrowe*. “ Your whole ministry and ministration is false and Antichristian; further, you have neither the freedom to practice Christ’s Testament, nor the power or will to redress anything that is amongst you, but either run to the Antichristian power and courts of bishops, or else continue obstinate and careless in your sins.”

Page 10. *Sperin*. “ I attribute much to the civil magistrate. I do it because of the civil magistrate that authorizeth the bishops.”

Barrowe. “ But may the civil magistrate either command anything contrary to the commandment of God, or is he to be obeyed therein, or can he excuse you before the tribunal of Christ for the breach of Gods laws?”

Sperin. “ Why, then, you affirm that the Queen and the parliament do wickedly in giving this power and authority unto the bishops; *will you write that?* ”

Barrowe. “ Yea, that I will, by the grace of God, and seal it with my blood also (if so God will), it being directly contrary to the Testament of Christ, as yourself confesseth, and yet continue to do contrary to your own conscience.”

Page 31. “ You exercise a ministerial function under Anti-

christ in a false office unto a confused [mixed] assembly of all sorts of people.”

Page 37. “As to your disordered parish assemblies, wherein you will needs be still poured out in the error of Balaam for wage, we have long since proved them wholly Antichristian, by sundry reasons drawn from the description of the true established church of Christ.”

“Infidels are such as either are never come, or are fallen from the faith, of which sort I affirm all the people as they thus stand in your parishes to be.”*

“HENRY BARROWE TOUCHING THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE.

“That the magistrate’s sword yet wanteth an eye to guide it.” (In his book against Mr. Giffard, p. 139, called “A Plain Refutation.”)

“That princes are not to be stayed for in the business of reformation, nor their restraint is a sufficient let. Yea, the cross of Christ were utterly abolished if the church and faithful were not to proceed in their duties until princes gave them leave.” (p. 196, 197.)

“That a prince may as well make a new religion, as new laws for religion.” (p. 205.)

“That to accuse them for exercising this government is to accuse Christ of treason, because He saith He is a king; and His servants of sedition, because they set up His kingdom without the licence and against the will of princes, though it cost them their lives for the same.” (p. 202.)

“That the prince, for any transgression of God’s laws, is liable and subject to the censures and judgments of Christ in His Church, which are without partiality or respect of persons, which censures and judgments, if the prince condemn, he condemneth *them against his own soul*, and is thereupon, by the same power of Christ, to be *disfranchised* out of the Church and

* Barrowe explained that by the word “infidels” he meant men “destitute of faith,” not separated from the world, and called in Scripture *apistoi* — unbelievers.

to be delivered unto Satan, as well as any other offender." (In his book entitled, "A Discovery of the False Church," p. 14.)

"The whole land overfloweth with all impiety, violence, cruelty, and iniquity, as in the days of Noah." ("Refutation of Giffard," p. 3.)

"IN THE INDICTMENT OF GREENWOOD.

"You exercise a ministerial function under Antichrist, in a false office, unto a confuse [mixed] assembly of all sorts of people."

"As to your disordered parish assemblies, wherein you will needs be still poured out in the error of Balaam for wage, we have long since proved them wholly Antichristian, by sundry reasons drawn from the description of the true established Church of Christ."

"These parishes, consisting of a company of profane and ignorant people, gathered by the sound of a bell, in the *name of Antichrist*, worshipping God after a false and idolatrous manner, denying all obedience unto Christ in His three offices, as their only king, priest, and prophet; living in disorder amongst themselves, standing in confusion, being disordered *and overruled by such laws and offices as the pope left*—and not as Christ left—standing in bondage to the Romish courts and canons, *having no power to exercise the Lord's judgment*, or to redress the least sin or transgression among themselves, but are driven to the commissaries' courts, and so cast out Satan by the power of Satan. They receive not and obey not Christ as their king, priest, and prophet. Not as their king, rejecting his government, and receiving and standing under the Antichristian yoke of the popish government. Not as their priest, sacrilegiously profaning his name with their idolatry—prostituting his blood, and making him a priest and sacrifice to infidels and the most wicked offenders. Not as their prophet, giving no obedience to his word—using it as a mantle to cover their sin, rather than as a rule whereby to direct their lives; not seeking a true ministry, but maintaining a false, of which

sort the whole ministry of the land are permitted to teach in the public places to whom they give ear.

“These assemblies are not ruled by the Old and New Testament, but by the canons, inventions, and devices of *their Antichristian* and popish courts. Therefore, these people stand not for their Christian liberty, but all of them remain in bondage to this *Egyptian and Babylonish* yoke, yielding obedience unto their courts and canons.”

“The causes of controversy thou mayest thereby perceive to be no light or small matters concerning things indifferent, or some few trifling ceremonies (as they have long laboured to make the world believe), although even those least trifles being brought into and thrust by name of law upon the Church, having no warrant in the Testament of Christ, ought not to be suffered for the space of an hour; but most high and weighty are these matters concerning the whole building of the Church, which is affirmed to be altogether out of order from the very foundation to the top, and not according to the pattern and ministry of Christ’s Testament, either in the people, ministry, ministration, work, government, or order. All things are out of frame, and such as can neither before the face of Christ, neither may any of God’s children join unto with promise of salvation.” The *italics* are those of the counsel.

Here was the case for the prosecution. There was no need for further witnesses, or if there had been a necessity for additional evidence, in the opinion of the court, no more testimony could be produced. No member of the bar was found who had sufficient courage to say a word in defence of the prisoners. If the books from which the extracts were quoted had been examined in court, there would have been found ample proof of the loyalty of the accused Separatists. Take a single instance : in the passage in which Barrowe speaks of the power of a Christian church to disfranchise even the prince, he adds : “*Now, though by this sin he loseth his right to be a Christian, or member of the church, yet loseth he not his right to be a king or magistrate, is so to be held of all faithful Christians which are his subjects.*” We have no need to point out the utter irrelevancy

of some of the extracts in proof of a seditious libel. They have no more pertinency in such a case than the axioms of Euclid would have as evidence in support of a charge of high treason. But, as we have already said, no other kind of testimony could be procured, and, in the temper of the judges, nothing further was necessary. A defence was made, however, by Barrowe that ought to have secured acquittal at any tribunal where truth would be considered, or equity might prevail. An account of it is given in a letter of extraordinary interest, written by Barrowe to "a certain Countess of his kindred," which we shall shortly present to the reader. The sentence of death was pronounced, and for the present we must leave the Christian prisoners under their unjust verdict. As they descended the steps of their gloomy cell, they might well have expressed their feelings in the words of the Psalmist: "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death. . . . for *thy sake* are we killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."

A pamphlet was written anonymously to show that the 23rd of Elizabeth could not by any fair construction be enforced against those who sought further reformation. Even the bishops pressed it against the Separatists only on the ground of expediency. But, as it was justly observed, "If such law be admitted, it will be the most dangerous and perilous practice that ever was received within this realm of England. For neither the prince, the councillors, the magistrates, bishops, or best subjects, can live in security. If men may violate law upon a colour or pretence of *expediency*, what endless mischiefs may ensue unto the commonwealth? What kind of precedent would this be to all succeeding ages?"

XI.

BARROWE AND GREENWOOD,

THEIR

Triple Martyrdom.

"They could not purchase earth with such a prize,
Or spare a life too short to reach the skies.
From them to thee conveyed along the tide,
Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they died
Those truths which neither use nor years impair."

COWPER.

THE conductors of the prosecution of Barrowe and Greenwood did not feel entire satisfaction in the sentence of the court, though carried to the "utmost rigour of the law." The moral suicide of the prisoners after all would have pleased them better than to take the lives placed at their absolute disposal. The Attorney-general felt as uneasy as Herod might feel after giving the command for the decapitation of John the Baptist. He writes :—

"My most humble duty to your lordship.

"This day, by virtue of her Majesty's commission of *Oyer and Terminer* in London, the court hath proceeded against Barrowe and Greenwood, and against Scipio Bellot, Robert Bowle, and Daniel Studley, for publishing and dispensing seditious books; and they are all attainted by verdict and judgment, and direction given for execution to-morrow, as in case of like quality.

"None showed any token of recognition of their offence and prayer for the same, saving Bellot alone, who desireth conference,

and to be informed of his errors, and, with tears, affirmeth himself to be very sorry that he hath been misled.

“The others pretended loyalty and obedience to her Majesty, and endeavour to draw all that they have most maliciously written and published against her Majesty’s government to the bishops and ministers of the church only, and not as meant against her Highness, which being most evident against them, and so found by the jury, *yet not one of them made any countenance of submission, but rather persisted in that they be convicted of.* This I have thought good to make known to your lordship, to the end that if her Majesty’s pleasure should be to have execution deferred, it might be known this night, and order given accordingly; otherwise, the direction given by the judges in open court will prevail. And so I commit your lordship to the Almighty. 23 Martii, 1592–3. Your lordship’s most humble at commandment,

“THO. EGERTON.”

Early on the morning of the 24th, Barrowe and Greenwood were ordered for execution, and brought out of the cell to the cart, apparently to intimidate them into submission, but they remained steadfast.

It was a dark day in the history of the Anglican church when her primate insisted on these judicial murders. The embarrassment of the civil authorities was increased by the mild and Christian temper of the prisoners. They betrayed no bitterness of spirit under the cruel injustice, but on returning to their cell calmly proposed some Christian conference. Barrowe in a letter to the Attorney-general writes : “My most humble and submissive desire unto your worship was and is, that forasmuch as there remain sundry ecclesiastical differences of no small weight between me, with sundry other her Highnesses faithful subjects, now imprisoned for the same, on the one side, and this present ministry, now by authority established in the land, on the other, undecided, or as yet undiscussed, your worship would vouchsafe to be a means to her most excellent Majesty, that a Christian and peaceable disputation by the scriptures might be vouchsafed unto some few of us, with

whom, or how many of our adversaries herein shall in wisdom be thought meet, for the ready and happy deciding or composing the same; *protesting to your worship, in the sight of God, at whose final judgment I look hourly to stand, that I hold not anything in these differences of any singularity or pride of spirit, but as I am hitherto certainly persuaded by the undoubted grounds of God's word, the profession and practice of other reformed churches, and learned of other countries.* Whereof if we, her Majesty's said few imprisoned subjects shall fail to make evident and assured proof, and that those learned shall show any other thing by the Word of God, in the said Christian conference desired, that then I for my *part vow unto your worship, through God's grace (as also I am persuaded my said imprisoned brethren permitted this conference will do the like), that I will utterly forsake any error I shall be so proved to hold, and in all humbly consent to submit to our now dissenting adversaries in all these matters wherein now we differ, if they shall approve them unto us by the Word of God.* By which charitable act your worship may put an end to these present controversies, reduce all wherein we err, and appease many Christian souls. Your worship's humble suppliant,

No date.

“HENRY BARROWE.”

The bishops refused a conference on such terms for the following reasons:—“1. Because a disputation has been denied to papists. 2. To call the ministry of the Church of England into question, is to call all other churches into question, against whom their exceptions extend. 3. The Church of England has submitted to disputation three times, in King Edward's, Queen Mary's, and Queen Elizabeth's times. 4. These men's errors have been condemned by the writings of learned men. 5. *'Tis not reasonable that a religion established by parliament should be examined by an inferior authority.* 6. *'Tis not reasonable to condemn those foreign churches that acknowledged ours for a true church.* 7. Their principal errors have been confuted by St. Austin. 8. This will strengthen the hands of the papists. 9. It has been the manner of heretics to require disputation with clamour and importunity; the

cause has been already decided by written books which they may consult. 11. They will not stand to the judgment of the civil magistrate. 12. If the church should satisfy every sect that riseth there would be no end of disputations."

Simultaneously with the trial of Barrowe and Greenwood, the bishops, through the agency of the legal advisers of the crown, urged the adoption of a bill in parliament to render the 23rd act of Elizabeth more stringent, and yet to extirpate the Separatists, by giving to them the alternative of submission or banishment, with the confiscation of goods, enforced under penalty for noncompliance or return. The proceedings of parliament were not without interest; but we reserve the notice of them to a future opportunity, that we may not be diverted from the case immediately before our notice.

The following notes from the Attorney-general will best indicate the relative position of all the parties concerned:—

"To the Right Honourable my very good lord the Lord Keeper.

"I have spent this whole afternoon at a fruitless, idle conference, and am but now returned, both weary and weak. If my health will serve me, I will wait upon your lordship to-morrow morning, and make report of this day's exercise. I have sent to your lordship, inclosed, an abstract of the bill in the Lower House against recusants, reformed, as the committee have brought it again into the House. How it is in anything changed in substance from the title, as it was first exhibited, doth appear in the marginal notes, which to-morrow I will fully declare to your lordship, if it shall please your honour to give me leave. And so rest in all things, at your lordship's commandment, the 26th of March, 1593. Your lordship's most humble at commandment,

"THO. EGERTON."

"To the Right Honourable my very good lord the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England.

"My most humble duty done [due] to your lordship. Immediately after my return from the Parliament House yesterday, I did write to my Lord Treasurer the manner and success

of the conference with Barrowe, and on what terms he stood at, and what disputation he requireth ; and withal I did send to his lordship a copy of Barrowe's request in that behalf, which, together with my letter, were delivered to his lordship yesterday in the afternoon. So as, so far as by letter I can inform his lordship, is already done. I am sorry this weakness of health falleth unto me at this time ; but God's will must be done. If your lordship think good that my Lord Anderson should attend my Lord Treasurer, to inform his lordship further, I beseech your lordship let my Lord Anderson know your lordship's pleasure therein. For I would forbear going into the air this one day, if I might, because I am so advised. So resting at your lordship's commandment in all things, I most humbly take my leave. 28 Martii, 1593. Your lordship's most humble at commandment,

“THO. EGERTON.”

On the 29th of March (the following day) Barrowe and Greenwood were conveyed to Tyburn, and once more the test of immediate death was submitted, but with the same result as before. The pursuit of the members of the church was so hot by the pursuivants of the bishops, that there was no opportunity for mutual counsel. We learn from the Pilgrim Fathers that Barrowe, in the midst of all this agitation and conflict, made provision for the poor of the flock. “We have not seen his person,” they said, “but some of us have been well acquainted with those *that knew him familiarly, both before and after his conversion, and one of us had conference with one that was his domestic servant.* Thus much we can affirm, from those that *well knew him*, that he was very comfortable to the poor, and those in distress in their sufferings ; and *when he saw he must die, he gave a stock for the relief of the poor of the church, which was a good help to them in their banished condition afterwards.*”

During his brief respite he prepared the following remarkable appeal to a certain “Countess of his kindred” :—

“*To the Right Honourable the [Countess of Warwick?]*

“Though it be no new and strange doctrine unto you, right honourable and excellent lady, who have been so educated

and exercised in the faith and fear of God, that the cross should be joined to the gospel, tribulation and persecution to the faith and profession of Christ; yet may this seem strange unto you, and almost incredible, that in a land professing Christ, such cruelty should be offered unto the servants of Christ for the truth and gospel's sake, and that by the chief ministers of the church, as they pretend.

“This no doubt doth make sundry, otherwise well affected, to think hardly of us and of our cause; and specially, finding us, by their instigation, indicted, arraigned, condemned, and ready to be executed by the secular powers, for moving sedition and disobedience, for defaming the renowned person and government of our most gracious sovereign Queen Elizabeth and this state.

“But, Right Honourable, if our adversaries' proceedings, and our sufferings, with the true causes thereof, might be duly expounded by the scriptures, I doubt not but their malice and our innocency should easily appear to all men; howsoever, now they think to cover the one and the other, by adding slander unto violence.

“Your ladyship readeth that the holy prophets who spoke in the name of God, yea, our blessed Saviour Himself and His apostles, have suffered like usage under the same pretence of sedition, innovation, rebellion against Cæsar and the State, at the hands and by the means of the chief ministers of that church, the priests, scribes, and pharisees—men of no less account for holiness, learning, and authority than these our adversaries.

“The faithful of all ages since that have witnessed against the malignant synagogue of Antichrist, and stood for the gospel of Christ, have suffered like usages at the hands of the same prelacy and clergy that now is in the land, though possessed of other persons. The quarrel still remaineth between the two opposite kingdoms of Christ and Antichrist, and so long shall endure as any part of the apostacy and usurped tyranny of the man of sin shall remain (2 Thes. ii. 8). The apostacy and tyranny of Antichrist, as it sprung not at once or in a day, but by degrees, wrought from his mystery to his

manifestation and exaltation in his throne ; so was he not at once wholly discovered or abolished ; but Christ, from time to time, by the beams of His appearing, discovered the iniquity ; so by the power of His word, which cannot be made of none effect, doth He abolish the same, and shall not cease this war until Antichrist, with His army, power, and ministry, be wholly cast out of His church (Rev. xvi. ; xix.). Assurance and manifest revelation hereof we have, both in general and particular, in that historical prophecy given of Christ unto His church by John the Divine, in the Book of Revelation, from the tenth to the twentieth chapter. Proof and accomplishment hereof we have hitherto found in the abolishing of all the errors, idolatries, trumperies, and forgeries, witnessed against by the faithful servants of Christ in former ages. Neither is there cause why we should doubt of the like sequel and event in the present and future times, seeing the enormities remaining are no less hateful to God, and contrary to the kingdom of Christ ; and God that condemneth them is a strong Lord to execute His will, which no opposition or tyranny of His adversaries shall be able to hinder or resist (Rev. xviii. 8).

“ While then we be, in the mercies of God, holding the most holy and glorious cause of Christ against them, that he might reign in His church by such officers and laws as He hath prescribed in His Testament, we fear not our adversaries in anything, knowing that their malice and opposition herein is made to them a token of perdition, and to us of salvation and that of God (Phil. i. 28, 29 ; 2 Thes. i.).

“ For this we are bold, both to stand for the holy ministry, government, and ordinances of Christ, prescribed in His word, and also to withstand and witness against the Antichristian hierarchy of the prelacy and clergy of this land in their ministry, ministration, government, courts, officers, canons, &c., which I, by writing, have showed to have no ground or warrant in God’s word—not to be given or to belong unto the church of Christ, but to be invented by man—the very same that the Pope still useth, and erewhile used and left in this land. The like, others of us, more learned, have offered and do still offer,

upon the dispense of our lives, to prove by the express word of God, in Christian and peaceable conference, against any whosoever that will there stand for the defence of the same.

“The prelates, seeing the axe thus laid to the roots of the tree of their pomp, and not able to approve their ministry, ministration, government, which they usurp and exercise in the church by the scriptures, *sought to turn away this question* and to get rid of their adversaries by other subtile and hostile practices, as at the first by *shutting up the chief of us in their close prisons*; by defaming us in their pulpits, printed books, and sparsed libels in the land; by seeking to *inveigle us with certain subtile questions to bring our lives into danger*; by suborned conferences with certain their select instruments; not to speak of the manifold molestation and cruel usage at their commandment showed us in their prisons. To their reproachful and slanderous books, being set of God, though most unworthy, and suffering for the defence of the faith, and being thus provoked by them, I held it my duty, according to the small measure of grace received, to make answer, which I also did more than three years since. *Likewise, to deliver ourselves from the false report and witness that might be made against us in those conferences, we thought good to publish them to the land. For these books, written more than three years since, after well near six years’ imprisonment sustained at their hands, have these prelates, by their vehement suggestions and accusations, caused us to be now indicted, arraigned, condemned, for writing and publishing seditious books, upon the same statute made the twenty-third year of her Majesty’s reign.*”

Their accusations were drawn into these heads:—

“FIRST. *That I should write and publish the Queen’s Majesty to be unbaptized.*

“SECONDLY. *The State to be wholly corrupted, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot—in the laws, judgments, judges, customs, &c., so that none that feared God could live in peace therein.*

“THIRDLY. *That all the people in the land are infidels.*

“To these indictments I answered generally, that either they were mistaken, or else misconstrued; that neither in my mean-

ing, matter, or words, any such crime could justly be found; my meaning being just and without evil towards any man, much more towards any sovereign of the state whom I from the heart honoured; the matters being merely ecclesiastical, controverted betwixt the clergy and us; my words being either in answer of their slanders, or in assertion of such things as I hold; that if I had offended in any of my words it was rather casual, through haste, than of any evil intent.

“More particularly to the *first, concerning the Queen’s baptism*, I answered that it was *utterly mistaken, both contrary to my meaning and to my express words* in that place of my book, as manifestly there appeareth to any indifferent reader.

“That I there *purposely defend her Majesty’s baptism* received against such as hold the baptism given in popery to be no baptism at all; where I proved that it needed not to be repeated; yet there I also showed such baptism given in popery not to seal God’s covenant in the church in that estate, and therefore that the abuse ought by all that had there received it to be repented.

“To the *second indictment*, I showed *the words by me used to be drawn from Isaiah i. and Revelations xiii.* That I had no evil mind towards the state, laws, or judges; but only showed that where the ministry, the salt, the light, is corrupted, the body and all the parts must needs be unsound; which I immediately, in the same place of that book, showed by the general breach of the laws of both tables, by all estates, degrees, persons, &c., setting down the particulars.

“To the *third indictment*, I answered, that I gladly embraced and believed the common faith received and professed in this land as most holy and sound; that I had reverend estimation of sundry, and good hope of many thousands in the land, though I utterly disliked the present constitution of this church in the present communion, ministry, ministration, worship, government, and ordinances ecclesiastical, of these cathedral and parishional assemblies.

“Some other few things, such as they thought might most make against me, were culled out of my writings and urged:

as, that I should hold her Majesty to be Antichristian, and her government Antichristian. To which I answered, that it was with great and manifest injury so collected, seeing in sundry places of that book, and *everywhere in all my writings and sayings, I have protested my exceeding good opinion and reverend estimation of her Majesty's royal person and government above all the princes in the world, for her most rare and singular virtues and endowments. I have everywhere in my writings acknowledged all duty and obedience to her Majesty's government as to the sacred ordinance of God, the supreme power He hath set over all causes and persons, whether ecclesiastical or civil, within her dominions;* always desiring to be intended of this false ecclesiastical government, foreign power, canons, and courts, brought in and usurped by the prelates and their accomplices.

"But these answers, or whatsoever else I could say or allege, prevailed nothing, all things being so hardly construed and urged against me, no doubt through the prelates' former instigations and malicious accusations. So that I, with my four other brethren, were, the 23rd of the third month, condemned and adjudged to suffer death as felons upon these indictments aforesaid. Upon the 24th, early in the morning, was preparation made for our execution; we brought out of the limbo, our irons smitten off, and we ready to be bound to the cart; when her Majesty's most gracious pardon came for our reprieve.

"After that the bishops sent unto us certain doctors and deans to exhort and confer with us. We showed how they had neglected the time; we had been well nigh six years in their prisons, never refused, but always humbly desired of them Christian conference, for the peaceably discussing and deciding our differences, but could never obtain it at their hands; neither did these men all this time come unto us, or offer any such matter. That our time now was short in this world, neither were we to bestow it unto controversies, so much as unto more profitable and comfortable considerations; yet if they desired to have conference with us, they were to get our lives respited thereunto. Then, if they would join unto us two other of our brethren in their prisons, whom we named unto them,

we then gladly would condescend to any Christian and orderly conference by the scriptures with such or so many of them as should be thought meet.

“ Upon the last day of the third month, my brother Greenwood and I were very early and secretly conveyed to the place of execution, where, being tied by the necks to the tree, we were permitted to speak a few words. We there, in the sight of that judge that knoweth and searcheth the heart, before whom we were then immediately to appear, protested our loyalty and innocency towards her Majesty, our nobles, governors, and this whole State; that in our writings we had no malicious or evil intent, so much as in thought, towards any of these, or toward any person in the world; that wherein we had through zeal, or unadvisedly, let fall any word or sentence that moved offence, or carried any show of irreverence, we were heartily sorry, and humbly besought pardon of them so offended for the same. Further, we exhorted the people to obedience and hearty love of their Prince and magistrates, to lay down their lives in their defence against all enemies; yea, at their hands, patiently to receive death, or any punishment they shall inflict, whether justly or unjustly. We exhorted them also unto orderly, quiet, and peaceable walking, within the limits of their own calling, to the holy fear and true worship of God. For the books written by us, we exhorted all men no further to receive any thing therein contained, than they should find sound proof of the same in the Holy Scriptures.

“ Thus craving pardon of all men whom we had any way offended, and freely forgiving the whole world, we used prayer for her Majesty, the magistrates, people, and even for our adversaries. And having both of us almost finished our last words, behold one was even at that instant come with a reprieve for our lives from her Majesty, which was not only thankfully received of us, but with exceeding rejoicing and applause of all the people, both at the place of execution, and in the ways, streets, and houses as we returned.

“ Thus pleased it God to dispose the uttermost violence of our adversaries, to the manifestation of our innocency, concerning the crimes whereof we were accused and condemned, and not only so, but also to the further showing forth of her Majesty's

princely clemency, rare virtue, and Christian care of her faithful subjects, to the yet further manifesting of her renowned fame and love amongst all her people. And sure we have no doubt but the same our gracious God that hath wrought this marvellous work in her Majesty's princely heart, to cause her of her own accord and singular wisdom, even before she knew our innocency, twice to stay the execution of that rigorous sentence, will now much more, after so assured and wonderful demonstration of our innocency, move her gracious Majesty freely and fully to pardon the execution thereof, as she that never desired, and always loathly shed the blood of her greatest enemies, much less will she now of her loyal, Christian, and innocent subjects—especially if her Majesty might be truly informed, both of the things that are passed, and of our lamentable estate and great misery wherein we now continue in a miserable place and case, in the loathsome gaol of Newgate, under this heavy judgment, every day expecting execution.

“Hereunto, if God shall move your noble heart, right virtuous lady, *not for any worldly cause (which, for my present reproach and baseness, I dare not mention to your honour), so much as for the love and cause of Christ, which we through the grace of God profess, to inform her Majesty of our entire faith unto God, unstained loyalty to her Highness, innocency and good conscience towards all men,* in pardoning our offence and judgment, or else in removing our poor worn bodies out of this miserable gaol (the horror whereof is not to be spoken unto your honour) to some more honest and meet place, if she vouchsafe us longer to live. Your ladyship doubtless shall herein do a right, Christian, and gracious act, acceptable to God, behoveful to your sovereign prince, comfortable to us the poor condemned prisoners of Christ, yea, to His whole afflicted Church, and most of all to your own praise and comfort in this life and in the life to come. Hereunto, further to exhort your honour, by the examples of the godly of like condition, in such times of public distresses and danger, I hope I need not so much as stir up that good gift and grace of God which is in you, not to neglect or put

from you this notable occasion sent unto you from God, to show forth the naturalness of your faith unto Him, of your fidelity to your Prince, of your love to the members of Christ in distress, whom as you succour or neglect herein, so assure yourself will Christ in His glory esteem it as done or denied to be done by you to His own sacred person.

“Let not, therefore, right dear and elect lady, any worldly or politic impediments or unlikelihoods, no fleshly fears, diffidence, or delays, stop or hinder you from speaking to her Majesty on our behalf, *before she go out of this city, lest we by your default herein perish in her absence*, having no assured stay or respite of our lives, and our malignant adversaries ready to watch any occasion for the shedding of our blood, as we by those two near and miraculous escapes have found. *Only, good madam, do your diligent endeavour herein, and commit the success, as we also with you shall, unto God in our prayers, which, howsoever it fall out, magnified be the blessed name of God in these our mortal bodies, whether by life or by death.* His mighty hand, that hath hitherto upholden us, assist us to the finishing up this last part of our warfare, to the vanquishing of our last enemy death with all his terrors, and to the attaining of that crown of glory which is purchased for us in the blood of Christ, laid up and surely kept for us in the hand of God—and not only for us, but for all that keep the faith and commandments of Jesus, of which number, noble lady, I hear and hope you are, and shall not cease (God willing), whilst I here live, to further the same unto you by my prayers and utmost endeavours. His grace and blessing, the prayers of the saints, and mine unworthy service, be with you. This 4th or 5th of the fourth month, 1593. Your honour’s humbly at commandment during life, *condemned of men, but received of God,*

“HENRY BARROWE.”

The day after writing this letter (if we take the last date mentioned), on the 6th April, 1593, Barrowe and Greenwood were hurried to the place of execution, secretly, and put to death. “Two aged widows,” who attended them in prison, were

permitted to follow them to the gallows “with winding sheets;” and it is probable that, to save the expense of their interment, the authorities suffered them to be carried to the grave by their friends, though under the pressure that was upon them few of the members of the church would venture to appear.

The occasion of the indecent and cruel haste of the bishops in putting the Separatist leaders to death, we learn from the following passage in a letter, signed Thomas Phillips, and addressed to Mr. William Sterrell, dated 7th April, 1593:—“The Parliament is to end this week. There was a bill preferred against the Barrowists and Brownists, making it felony to maintain any opinions against the ecclesiastical government, which, by *the bishops’ means, did pass the Upper House*, but found so captious by the Nether House as it was thought it would never have passed in any sort, for it was thought all the Puritans would have been drawn within the compass thereof. Yet by *the earnest labouring of those who sought to satisfy the bishops’ humours*, it is passed to this effect: that whosoever shall be an obstinate recusant, refusing to come to any church, and do deny the Queen to have any power or authority in ecclesiastical causes, and do, by writing or otherwise, publish the same, and be a keeper of conventicles, also, being convicted, he shall abjure the realm within three months, and lose all his goods and lands, if he return without leave it shall be felony. Thus have they minced it, as is thought, so as it will not reach to any man that shall deserve favour in a concurrence of so many faults and actions. The week before, upon the late conventicle you wrote of last, Barrowe and Greenwood, with some others, were indicted, arraigned, and condemned upon the statute, of writing and publishing seditious books, and should have been executed, but as they were ready to be trussed up were reprieved, *but the day after the Court House had showed their dislike of this bill were early in the morning hanged*. It is said their reprieval proceeded of a supplication to the Lord Treasurer, complaining that in a land where no papist was touched for religion by death, their blood (concurring in opinion touching faith which was professed in the realm) should be

first shed. Desiring, therefore, conference to be removed from their errors by reason, or else for satisfaction of the world, touching their opinions, *which was communicated by him to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, notwithstanding, was very peremptory, so as the Lord Treasurer gave him and the Bishop of Worcester some round taxing words, and used some speech to the Queen, but was not seconded by any, which hath made him now remiss as is thought. It is plainly said that their execution proceeded of malice of the bishops, to spite the Nether House, which hath procured them much hatred among the common people affected that way.*"

It was understood by the Separatists that the Queen was "ignorant of Barrowe and Greenwood's execution, and displeased at it when she heard of it afterwards." But this is doubtful. Mr. Phillips, a Puritan minister, reports that she asked Dr. Reynolds what he thought of those two men, Mr. Barrowe and Mr. Greenwood, and he answered her Majesty that it could not avail anything to show his judgment concerning them seeing that they were put to death; and being loath to speak his mind further, her Majesty charged him, upon his allegiance, to speak. Whereupon he answered, that he was persuaded, if they had lived, they would have been two as worthy instruments for the church of God as have been raised up in this age. Her Majesty then said no more. But after that, riding to a park by the place where they were executed, and being willing to take further information concerning them, demanded of the Right Honourable the Earl of Cumberland, that was present when they suffered, what end they made. He answered: "A very godly end, and prayed for your Majesty and the State." The rumour also was current, that the Queen demanded of the Archbishop what he thought of them in his conscience. He answered: "He thought that they were the servants of God, but dangerous to the State. "Alas!" said she, "shall we put the servants of God to death?" For ourselves we are no believers in the tender sensibilities of Elizabeth. Her sighs near the place of execution did not prevent, as we shall see, the repetition of a similar tragedy, in the martyrdom of Penry. It is very probable that neither the

Queen nor the Archbishop anticipated that, after the lapse of more than two centuries and a half, the exposure of their crimes in this matter should be so complete.

The following is the clause in 23rd Elizabeth, cap. ii. 4, under which Barrowe and his companions were indicted:—

“And be it further enacted, &c. That if any person or persons, after the end of the said forty days, either within this realm or in any other the Queen’s dominions, or in any other place out of the Queen’s dominions, shall *advisedly and with a malicious intent* against our Sovereign Lady, devise, write, print, or set forth any manner of book or writing, containing any false, seditious, and slanderous matter, to the defamation of the Queen’s Majesty that now is, or to the encouraging, stirring, or moving any insurrection or rebellion within this realm. Every such offence shall be deemed and adjudged felony, and the offenders therein, being thereof convicted and attainted, shall suffer such pains of death and forfeiture as in case of felony is used, without any benefit of clergy or sanctuary.”

XII.

THE PILGRIM MARTYR,

AND

His Dying Testimony.

“The oppressor holds
His body bound; but knows not what a range
His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain,
And that to bind him is a vain attempt,
Whom God delights in, and in whom He dwells.”

COWPER.

PENRY was apprehended at the time of Barrowe and Greenwood's trial. He was committed to the Counter, in the Poultry, on the 24th of March, 1592-3, and on the 26th and 28th of the same month, overtures were made to him by Mr. Justice Young, Dr. Vaughan, and other ministers, for private conference. The proposition was renewed on the 2nd of April, but Penry “refused all private meddling in so public an action.” He had no confidence in their professions of “Christian charity,” and was on his guard. He was prepared at the same time for a fair and dispassionate discussion of the points in controversy, and jotted down four propositions respecting the offices held in the Anglican church, the manner of their appointment, the service performed, and the means of their support. In the original paper, written in haste, he says, “These things, by the Lord's assistance, we will be ready to make good by the Word of God, and if it be thought needful, by the writings of the holy martyrs of this land (whereof some are privileged by

her Majesty's authority), and also by the doctrine of the reformed churches.

"A conference we are most willing to yield unto. Our humble request unto her Majesty and your honours is, that if it may stand with their pleasure, we may have but this equity unto us in it.

"1. That the questions on both sides being laid down in *writing*, the reasons briefly annexed unto them, the answers also may with the like brevity be returned in *writing*, and so everything will be more *deliberately set down, and all bye speeches and matters shall be avoided*.

"2. That such of us as are scholars, and on the one side, *may confer together (having also the use of books) about the answers and replies that we shall make*.

"3. That those of the ecclesiastical state with whom we are to deal, may be *but reporters in this conference, and not judges*; and, that such of the civil state may be appointed by their honours (if their lordships will not take the hearing of the cause upon themselves, which we had rather and earnestly crave), *to see that both parties do contain themselves within bounds*, lest otherwise the holy truth of God should not be dealt with as it beseemeth the same, or so holy and necessary an action should be unprofitably broken off, by the infirmities or other greater wants of either parties.

"JOHN PENRY."

Without such conditions, Penry knew, from the case of Barrowe and Greenwood, the danger of rash expressions, uttered at the moment of excitement, and the certainty of misrepresentation. When Mr. Thomas Sperin, the rector of the church in Milk Street, City, came to Barrowe in prison, he said that he visited him in "love, to confer brotherly and christianly with him, not unto his harm or prejudice in any kind of way;" but the sequel proved that his real object was to provoke some utterance that might involve them in a charge of treason. The imprisoned Separatists regarded him only as a "betrayer and murderer," and gave vent to their feelings of indignation. Penry, patient toward all men, with more

precaution, declined discussion that might lead either to recrimination or "vain jangling." It was not the object of the inquisitors to elicit truth, and the proposal for "equity" was declined.

The day on which Barrowe and Greenwood suffered death left Penry free to write a letter to his wife, full of tenderness and of Christian counsel. We quote a few passages to indicate its spirit :—

"I see my blood laid for (my beloved), and so my days and testimony drawing to an end (for aught I know), and, therefore, I think it my duty to leave behind me this testimony of my love to so dear a sister, and so loving a wife, in the Lord, as you have been to me.

"First, then, I beseech you, stand fast in the truth which you and I profess in much outward discouragement and danger....Continue a member of that holy society whereof you and I am; where the Lord in His ordinances reigneth; for here, and in all such assemblies, the Lord dwelleth by the presence and power of His spirit. Look not at any earthly thing; consecrate yourself wholly, both soul and body, husband, children, and whatsoever you have, unto the Lord your God. Let them not be dearer unto you than God's service and worship. *Know it to be an unspeakable preferment for you,* that He vouchsafeth to take either yourself or any of yours to suffer afflictions with Him and His gospel here upon earth. I am persuaded that you have undergone the profession of the truth upon the condition set down by our Saviour Jesus Christ—that is, to hate all in respect to the gospel. Fear not the want of outward things. He careth for you. The Lord is my God and yours, and the God of our seed. I know, if you and our poor children continue, that you shall see a blessed reward in this life for those small and weak sufferings of ours, *for the interest and right of Christ Jesus*; for I am assured that the Lord will give a breathing time of comfortable rest unto His poor church in this life.

"In the meantime *wait patiently the Lord's leisure.* He is not forgetful of you and yours, especially of His poor church.

He cannot deny himself, and the truth of His promises you know. Be much and often in prayer, night and day, in the reading and meditation of His word, and you shall find that He will grant you your heart's desire according to His own pleasure and will. Pray with your poor family and children morning and evening, as you do. *Instruct them and your maid in the good ways of God, so that no day may pass over your head wherein you have not taught them (especially her) some one principle of truth.....*

“Observe your own special infirmities and wants, and be earnest with the Lord that he would do them away, and consume them by the power of His spirit. Remember me also, and my brethren in bonds, that the Lord would assist us with the strength and comfort of His spirit to keep a good conscience, *and to bear a glorious testimony unto the end.* Yea, be not void of hope but I may be restored again unto you by your prayers, and therefore also be earnest with Him for my deliverance.

“If the Lord shall end my days in this testimony, as blessed be His name howsoever it may be, I am ready and content with His good pleasure. *Keep yourself, my good Helen, here with this poor church.* You may make all good refuge and stay here, as any widow else, for your outward estate. Though you could not, yet I know that you had rather dwell under the wings of the God of Israel in poverty, with godly Ruth, than to possess kingdoms in the land of Moab; and what shift soever you make, keep our poor children with you, that you may bring them up yourself in the instruction and information of the Lord. I leave you and them, indeed, nothing in this life but the blessing of my God, and His blessed promises, made unto me, a poor wretched sinner, that my seed, my habitation, and family, should be blessed and happy upon the earth; and this, my sister, I doubt not, shall be found an ample portion both for you and them; though you know that in hunger often, in cold often, in poverty and nakedness, we must make account to profess the gospel in this life. Teach them even now, I beseech you, in their youth, that lesson,

indeed, which was the last that I taught them in word—that if they will reign with Christ, they must suffer with Him. Teach them not to look for great things in this life, but every day to make account that they are to yield up their lives, and whatsoever they have, for the truth. . . . *I know, my good Helen, that the burden which I lay upon thee of four infants, whereof the eldest is not four years old, will not seem in any way burdensome to thee. . . .* Thus, having hitherto disburdened myself of my duty towards you, and care over you and our poor children in some part, to come unto myself. *I am, I thank God, of great comfort in Him, though under great trials of my weakness, not for any fear of any flesh, I thank my God, but in consideration of my wants, rebellious disobedience, and unthankfulness towards His Majesty. But in regard of men, and in respect of the cause of my God, wherein I stand, I fear not any power or strength of man whatsoever ; and I am, this hour, most willing to lay down my life for the word of my testimony, and I trust shall be unto the end. . . .* Upon Wednesday I was sent for unto the Sessions House, where Mr. George Barnes, as I take it, Mr. Young, Mr. Dale, the Dean of Westminster, and another of the clergy. . . . I was plain with them, but especially with Mr. Young. This is most memorable, that alleging (Numbers xxxv. 33), ‘So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are ; for blood it defileth the land : and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it’—they set it down as an article against me, though I read the very words unto them. They were so lamentably ignorant, and lay wait for blood so cruelly, that certainly the Lord’s hand is not far off. The Lord show mercy unto us and *them* ; from my heart I say it. I cannot but think that they thirst after my blood ; therefore pray for me, and desire all the church to do the same. . . .

“ *If I be offered upon this sacrifice, I pray thee, my good Helen, that all the dispersed papers which I have written in this cause, and are yet out of the enemies’ hands, may be published unto the world after my death, together with the letters which I have written in the same cause that are of any moment ; though they be imperfect, yet*

the enemies' mouths will be stopped by that means, and no small light given unto the cause.

“There are some of them among our brother, Mr. Smyth's, papers; the rest you shall know where they are. Take the directions of the church in this. If the Lord shall grant me life, myself will accomplish my purpose this way by His grace. To draw to an end: salute the whole church from me, especially those in bonds, and be you all much and heartily saluted. Let none of them be dismayed; the Lord will send a glorious issue unto Zion's troubles. Yet you must all be prepared for sufferings, I see likelihood. Let not those which are abroad, miss to frequent their holy meetings. Salute my mother and yours, in Wales; my brethren, sisters, and kindred there.

“My God knoweth, yea, yourself know, how earnestly and often I have desired that the Lord would vouchsafe my service in the gospel amongst them, to the saving of their souls, for ever more unto Him. Salute your parents and mine, and our kindred in Northamptonshire; with my poor kinsman, Jenkyn Jones, and Mr. Davidd also, though *I had not thought that any outward respect would have made him to withdraw his shoulders from the Lord's ways; but the Lord will draw him forward in His good time.* Salute all ours in Scotland, upon the borders, and every way northward, especially Mr. Fuel, always dear unto me. Christ Jesus bless thee and you all, my beloved, even for ever and ever. Let it not be known unto any, save the party who shall read this unto you, that I have written at all as yet. I got means this day to write this much, whereof no creature living knoweth. This sixth of the fourth month of April, 1593. In great haste, with many tears, and yet in great spiritual comfort of my soul, your husband for a season, and your beloved brother for evermore.

JOHN PENRY.

“P.S.—In any case, let it not be known that I have written unto you—be sure thereof. I would wish you to *go to the judges for me, with your children*, desiring them to consider your hard case and mine. Yea, and I would *have you, if you can, go to the Queen with them*, beseeching her, for God's cause, to show

her wonted clemency unto her subjects; with my Lord Treasurer, and other of the Council, whom you think, to regard your and my cries; for sure *my life is sought for*. I am ready, pray for me, much and earnestly. The Lord comfort thee, good Helen, and strengthen thee. Be not dismayed. I know not how thou dost for outward things, but my God will provide. My love be with thee now and ever in Christ Jesus."

A few days after this affecting communication, Penry wrote a long letter to his children, to be read by them when they should come to years of discretion:—

"My daughters," he says, in this most touching document, "even my tenderly beloved daughters, regard not the world, nor anything that is therein. Look only upon the durable crown of reward, that lasteth for ever more, which the Lord Jesus offereth unto you, and unto all, if you suffer with Him. I, your father, you have as a witness before you in the enduring for these six years some part of these sufferings. *Your mother hath been joyfully partaker with me of them*. Ever since the Lord joined me and her together, all of you have been born in this time of your mother's testimony and mine; wherefore, I am in good hope that the Lord will give you grace to follow us, your poor parents, in that which is acceptable in His sight.

"In other things, for the direction of your private lives, I *refer you to your mother, who hath been a most faithful sister and comfortable yoke-fellow to me in all my trials and sufferings, and, for your comfort and mine, hath taken bitter journeys by sea and land*. Repay her, then, by your dutifulness and obedience, some part of that kindness which (one may be sure) you owe unto her....

"The eldest of you is not yet four years old, and the youngest not four months; and, therefore, every way shall you be indebted to that mother who will think it no intolerable burden to bear and take the care of you all....

"Whatsoever becometh of you in outward regard, keep yourselves in this poor church, where I leave you, or in some other holy society of the saints. I doubt not but my God will

stir up many of His children to show kindness unto my faithful sister and wife, your mother, and also unto you, even for my sake. . . . *I have left you four Bibles, each of you one, being the sole and only patrimony or dowry that I have for you.* I beseech you and charge you not only to keep them, but to read in them day and night; and before you read, and also in and after reading, be earnest in prayer and meditation, that you may understand and perform the good way of your God. . . .

“Frame yourselves to be humble, lowly, meek, and patient toward all men. *Reward no man evil for evil, either in word or in deed, but overcome evil with goodness, with patience, modesty, and sobriety.* Above all things, show yourselves loving and kind unto all the saints of God, being ready to lay down your lives to do good unto the Lord’s poor church, and members here upon earth. Whatsoever you have, bestow somewhat for the relief of the church. Diminish from your diet and apparel, that you may bestow the same upon the church and members of Christ, for the maintenance of the true worship and service of God among them. . . .

“The Welsh nation, now for many years past, have been under the Lord’s rod, but I trust the time is come wherein He will show mercy unto them, by causing the true light of the gospel to shine among them; and, my good daughters, pray you earnestly unto the Lord—when you come to know what prayer is—for this, and be always ready to show yourselves helpful unto the least child of that poor country that shall stand in need of your loving support; in any case, repay the kindness, if you be able, which I owe unto my nearest kindred there—as to my mother, brethren, and sisters, whom I am persuaded will be most kind towards you and your mother, unto their ability, even for my sake; and be an especial comfort, in my stead, unto the gray hairs of my poor mother, whom the Lord used as the only means of my stay for me in the beginning of my studies. . . .

“Finally, my daughters, grow in all graces of knowledge and godliness in Christ Jesus. Believe and hope firmly in that salvation which is to be had by Him. Suffer affliction with

Him in this poor church. Continue in holy fear unto the end ; then shall you and I have a blessed meeting in the great day of His appearance.

“ Thus have I unburdened my careful soul of some part of that great solicitude which every way I have of your salvation. I have written this in that scarcity of paper, ink, and time, that I could do it no otherwise than first it came into my mind and set it down ; and, therefore, it is neither so full nor so profitable a counsel as otherwise, upon better leisure, my God, I trust, would have enabled me to give you. . . .

“ From close prison, with many tears, and yet in much joy of the Holy Ghost, this 10th of the fourth month of April, 1593. Your poor father here upon earth, most careful to be joined with you for evermore in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

“ JOHN PENRY.”

In Penry the Christian rose above the reformer. His zeal was tempered with charity, and his courage was blended with the meekness of wisdom and the patience of hope. We find in him neither servility nor resentment. By the grace of God he had learnt to overcome the indignant feeling excited by a sense of wrong. This rendered him invincible. If he had been fretted by disappointment, and embittered in spirit by the injury and injustice he had suffered in every form for a succession of years, he must have sunk in despondency, or given his enemies the advantage they so keenly sought. But in every new perplexity and trial he maintained his consistency, and evinced, with the utmost simplicity, a fertility of resource truly marvellous.

He was neither to be trepanned by the bishops nor to be intimidated by the judges. His examination (as given in his biography) before Justice Fanshawe is worthy of the most careful study, as an exhibition of mental power in connection with the highest moral worth. His views on some points were much clearer and more comprehensive than those of his martyred brethren. On questions relating to the faith and order of a Christian church Barrowe and Greenwood wrote with

great clearness, but in reference to the means to be used for the evangelization of the ignorant and depraved there is some degree of confusion and obscurity in their ideas, not to say unaccountable incongruity. They did not see that as the church is to choose its own pastor it is also to send forth evangelists. Greenwood (when pressed in his conference with Sperin and Cooper) said: "Both the magistrate ought to compel the infidels to hear the doctrine of the church, and also, with the approbation of the church, to send forth men with gifts and graces to instruct the infidels, being as yet no ministers or officers unto them." The sentiment was totally out of harmony with the principles they had maintained. The apostles made no claim on the Roman exchequer. Penry was not surprised into any such inconsistent admission. As a Puritan he had made many appeals to Parliament as the only public association of men in existence likely to provide for the evangelization of Wales. But we find no trace of such views after his adhesion to the church of the Separatists. His answers on this subject to Fanshawe are worthy of attention :—

Fanshawe. "And what office had you in your church, which meet in woods and I know not where?"

Penry. "I have no office in that poor congregation; and as for our meeting in woods, or anywhere else, we have the example of our Saviour Christ, and of His church and servants in all ages, for our warrant. It is against our wills that we go into woods, or secret places; as we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, so our desire is to profess the same openly; we are ready, before men and angels, to show and justify our meetings, and our behaviour in them, desiring earnestly that we may have peace and quietness to serve our God, even before all men, that they may be witnesses of our upright walking towards God and all the world, especially towards our prince and country. We know that meeting in woods, in caves, and mountains, is a part of the cross and baseness of the gospel, whereat it is easy for the natural man to stumble, but we are gladly partakers of this mean estate for the Lord's sacred verity; and the question should not be so much, where we

meet, as what we do in our meeting? Whether our meetings and doings be warranted by the Word or not, and what enforced us to meet in these places?"

Fanshawe. "Did you not *preach* in these your secret meetings? What warrant have you so to do, if you have not public office in your church?"

Penry. "Whether I did or not, I do not tell you for the present; but this I say, that if the same poor congregation desired to have the use of my small gifts for the instruction and consolation thereof, I would, being thereunto prepared, most willingly bestow my poor talent in their mutual edification and mine."

Fanshawe. "And may you teach in the church publicly, having no public office therein?"

Penry. "I may, because I am a member thereof, and requested thereunto by the church, and judged to be endued, in some measure, with gifts, meet for the handling of the Lord's sacred Word. The body of Christ (that is, every particular congregation of the church) ought to have the use of all the gifts that are in any member thereof, and the member cannot deny unto the body the use of those graces wherewith it is furnished, except it will break the laws and order of the body, and become unnatural unto the same. (Rom. xii.; 1 Cor. xii.) It is to the Christian church, and not to the State, that the spiritual gifts are imparted which are needful for edification and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom."

"Let the arts, tongues, and other human knowledge," said Penry, "be taught in schools; and let the holy truth and exercises of religion be derived from the church of Christ, which the apostle for this purpose calleth the pillar and ground of truth."

At the close of his remarkable examination, Penry, with true Christian dignity, said: "I beseech your worships to consider that it is to no purpose that her Majesty's subjects should bestow their time in learning, in the study and meditation of the word of God, in the reading of the writings and doings of the learned men and holy martyrs that have been in

former ages, especially the writings published by her Majesty's authority, *if they may not, without danger, profess and hold those truths which they learn out of them*; and, that in such sort as they are able, to convince all the world who stand against them by no other weapon than by the word of God. *Consider, also, I pray you, what a lamentable case it is, that we may join with the Romish church in the inventions thereof, without all danger, and cannot, but with extreme peril, be permitted in judgment and practice to dissent from the same when it swerveth from the true way.* And as you find these considerations to carry some weight with them, so I beseech you to be a means unto her Majesty and their honours that my case may be weighed in even balance. *Imprisonments, indictments, yea, death itself, are no meet weapons to convince men's consciences."*

Penry felt that he was in jeopardy every hour. He watched for an opportunity to write "to the distressed faithful congregation of Christ in London." On the 24th of April, 1593, he sent to them an address, in which he speaks in these thrilling words: "Beloved! let us think our lot and portion more than blessed, that are now vouchsafed the favour, not only to know and to profess, but also to suffer for the sincerity of the gospel, and let us remember that great is our reward in heaven if we endure unto the end.... I am not only ready to be bound and banished, but even to die in this cause by His strength. Yea, my brethren, I greatly long, in regard of myself, to be dissolved, and to live in the blessed kingdom of heaven with Jesus Christ and His angels; with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Job, David, Jeremy, Daniel, Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, and with the rest of the holy saints, both men and women; with the glorious kings, prophets, and martyrs, and witnesses of Jesus Christ, that have been from the beginning of the world, particularly with my two dear brethren, Mr. Henry Barrowe and Mr. John Greenwood, which have, last of all, yielded their blood for this precious testimony. Confessing unto you, my brethren and sisters, that if I might live upon this earth the days of Methuselah twice told, and that in no less comfort than Peter,

James, and John were in the Mount, and, after this life, might be sure of the kingdom of heaven, that yet, to gain all this, I durst not go from the former testimony....

“Be kind, loving, and tender hearted, the one of you towards the other; *labour every day to increase love, and to show the duties of love, one of you towards another*, by visiting, comforting, and relieving one the other, even for the reproach of the heathen that are round about us (as the Lord saith). Be watching in prayer; especially remember those of our brethren that are especially endangered, particularly those—our two brethren, Mr. Robert Studley and Robert Bowle—whom our God hath strengthened now to stand in the forefront of the battle.

“I fear me that our carelessness was over great to sue unto our God for the lives of those two so suitable lights of His church, who now rest with Him, and that He took them away for many respects seeming good to His wisdom; so, also, that we might be careful in prayer in all such causes. Pray for them, my brethren, and for our brother, Mr. Francis Johnson, and for me, who am likely to end my days, either with them or before them, that our God may spare us unto His church, if it be His good pleasure, or give us exceeding faithfulness, and be every way comfortable unto the sister and wife of the dead, whom I most heartily salute and desire much to be comforted in their God, who, by His blessings from above, will countervail unto them the want of so notable a brother and husband.”*

It was difficult for the authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, to find a proper ground of accusation against Penry. He submitted a paper to show, from the clearest legal considerations, that he was not indicted under the statute of the 23rd of Elizabeth.

The bishops suggested that his recognition of Barrowe and Greenwood as “martyrs” was in itself a seditious libel, but

* The counsels of Penry in this affecting letter will come under consideration in a series of papers on the Exiles in Holland.

the advisers of the crown did not accept their dictum. The rough outline of an intended appeal to Queen Elizabeth, written by Penry, in Scotland, was found in his possession; and on some expressions contained in this document the conductors of the prosecution agreed to rest their case. Nothing could exceed the injustice of such a course, but no more conclusive testimony could be given to the innocence of Penry, though indirect and unintentional. It required the utmost ingenuity of the lawyers to bring the matter into shape for judicial reports. Two indictments were framed, which are recorded in Sir Edward Coke's "Book of Entries," verbatim. The cause was heard at Westminster, before the Lord Chief Justice, and the rest of the judges, on the 21st of May, 1593; and it is scarcely needful to add that conviction was obtained.

On the following day Penry, being removed to the Queen's Bench, Southwark, prepared a long, elaborate, and most eloquent "protestation,"* together with a letter to Lord Burleigh, dated "this 22nd of the 5th month, May, 1593."

"My days," he says to the Lord Treasurer, "I see, are drawing to an untimely, and I thank God, an undeserved end, except the Lord my God shall stir up your honour, or some other, to plead my cause, and to acquaint her Majesty with my guiltless estate.

"How clear I am of that heinous crime, especially now intended against me, this my writing doth declare.

"The case is most lamentable, that the private observations of any student, being in a foreign land, and wishing well to his prince and country, should bring his life, with blood, unto a violent end; especially seeing they are most private, and so imperfect, as they have no coherence at all in them, and, in most places, carry no true English. If I may crave so much favour of your lordship, as to procure that her Majesty, before I be farther proceeded with, may be acquainted with this true testimony of the affection and loyalty which I have ever carried

* These papers are given at length in the Life of "Penry the Pilgrim Martyr."

towards her Highness, I shall entreat the Lord that you may not want your reward for this work. *Law I know there is none that can take hold of me ;* and yet I refer wholly to her determination, and will be contented with the sentence which the Lord shall move her to give me.

“ Though mine innocency may stand me in no stead before an earthly tribunal, yet I know I shall have the reward thereof before the judgment seat of the Great King ; and the merciful Lord who relieveth the widow and fatherless, will reward my desolate orphans and friendless widow that I leave behind me, and even hear their cry, for He is merciful.”

At the close of his “ protestation,” Penry writes :—

“ I thank God, that whensoever an end of my days comes, *as I look not to live this week to an end,* mine innocency shall benefit so much, as I shall die Elizabeth’s most faithful subject, *even in the conscience of my very adversaries themselves,* if they will be the beholders thereof ; and, by my death, convince them before all the world that I have lived so too. And my God, I trust, will one day cause my innocency to shine as the noon day before my gracious prince.

“ I am a poor young man, born and bred in the mountains of Wales. I am the first, since the last springing up of the gospel in this latter age, that laboured to have the blessed seed sown in those barren mountains. I have often rejoiced before my God, as he knoweth, that I had the favour to be born and live under her Majesty, for the promoting of this work. In the earnest desire I had to see the gospel in my native country, and the contrary corruptions removed, I might well, as I confess in my published writings, with Hegetorides the Thracian, forget mine own danger ; but my loyalty to my prince did I never forget. And being now to end my days, before I am come to the one half of my years in the likely course of nature, I leave the success of my labours unto such of my countrymen as the Lord is to raise after me for the accomplishing of this work, which, in the calling of my country unto the knowledge of Christ’s blessed gospel, I began.

“ I never took myself for a rebuker, much less for a

reformer of states and kingdoms ; far was that from me ; yet, in the discharge of my conscience, *all the world must bear with me, if I prefer my testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ before the favour of any creature.* An enemy unto any good order and policy, either in church or commonwealth, was I never. All good learning and knowledge of the arts and tongues I laboured to attain unto, and to promote to the uttermost in my power. Whatsoever I wrote in religion, the same I did simply for no other end than for the bringing of God's truth to light. I never did anything in His cause (Lord, thou art witness) for contention, vain glory, or to draw disciples after me, or to be accounted singular. Whatsoever I wrote, or held, beside the warrant of the written Word, I have always warned men to leave ; and *wherein I saw that I erred myself, I have, as all the land doth now know, confessed my ignorance, and framed my judgment and practice according to the truth of the Word, notwithstanding that this be prejudicial to my public writings, yea, and life.* The like am I ready to do in anything which I hold beside the truth at this hour.

“That brief confession of my faith and allegiance unto the Lord and her Majesty, written since my imprisonment, and delivered to the worshipful Mr. Justice Young, I take, as I shall answer before Jesus Christ and the elect angels, to contain nothing but God's eternal verity in it ; and, therefore, *if my blood were an ocean sea, and every drop thereof were a life unto me, I would give them all, by the help of the Lord, for the maintenance of the same, my confession.* Yet, if any error can be showed therein, *that will I not maintain.*”

“Otherwise, far be it, that either the saving of an earthly life, the regard which I ought to have to the desolate outward state of a poor friendless widow and four poor fatherless infants, whereof the eldest is not above four years old, which I am to leave behind me, or any other outward thing should enforce me, by the denial of God's truth, contrary to my conscience, to leese mine own soul, the Lord, I trust, will never give me over unto this sin. Great things in this life I never sought for ; not so much as in thought. A mean and

base outward state, according to my mean condition, I was content with. Sufficiency I have had, with great outward troubles; but most contented I was with my lot, and content I am, and shall be, with my undeserved and untimely death; beseeching the Lord that it be not laid to the charge of any creature in this land—for *I do from my heart forgive all those that seek my life, as I desire to be forgiven in that day of strict account, praying for them as for my own soul, that although upon earth we cannot accord, we may yet meet in heaven, unto our eternal comfort and unity, where all controversies shall be at an end.* And if my death can procure any quietness to the church of God, or the State, I shall rejoice. I know not to what better use it could be employed if it were reserved; and, therefore, in this cause I desire not to spare the same. Thus have I lived towards the Lord and my prince; and thus I mean to die by His grace. Many such subjects I wish unto my prince, though no such reward to any of them.”

This impressive memorial had no effect upon the Privy Council. On the 25th of May sentence of death was formally pronounced on Penry. As execution did not take place on the second or third day, the people expected a respite; but four days after, Archbishop Whitgift attended at the Council Chamber, with Sir John Puckering, the Lord Keeper, and Sir John Popham, the Lord Chief Justice, to sign the warrant. The primate affixed his name first; the instrument was sent immediately to the Sheriff, who proceeded on the same day to erect the gallows at St. Thomas-a-Watering (situated close to the second milestone on the Old Kent-road). While Penry was at dinner, the officers came to bid him make ready, for he must die that afternoon at four o'clock; an unusual, and therefore unexpected hour. He was led, at five, from the prison in the High Street, Borough, to the fatal spot. A small company of persons, attracted by seeing the workmen preparing the gibbet, had collected together. Penry would have spoken, but the Sheriff insisted, that neither in protestation of his loyalty, nor the avowal of his innocence, should he utter a

word. His life was taken, and the people were dispersed. The place of his burial is unknown. But—

“Though nameless, trampled, and forgot,
His servant’s humble ashes lie;
Yet God has marked and sealed the spot,
To call its inmate to the sky.”

“In June, 1594,” Kennett tells us, “Mr. John Clarke (late Mayor of St. Albans) was brought into the High Commission Court, where, among other articles, these were objected to him: ‘That you, the said John Clarke, in the year 1593, permitted divers and sundry ministers, not licensed or allowed by authority, to be privately exercised in your own house, and namely, one John Penry (lately executed), or at least have secretly received and entertained the said John Penry, and have had much conference with him within your own house, and have uttered your liking of many of his factious opinions, insomuch that you have kept many of his seditious books, supposed to be written by him, and have dispersed or imparted some of them to others—then, that the said Penry, not long before his arraignment, was at your house, and had conference with you, and that you, before his departure from you, understanding that he was endangered, did then *promise to pray for him*, saying that you hoped both he and his cause should return with credit.’”

~~A T. E. 2 71~~
50 44 m. 6. 1/2 April 1593.

John Penry.

EPILOGUE.

OUR work to-day is that of thorough instruction. All who understand and value their principles should take part in it without loss of time. Let us begin at the beginning; for in this way only we shall better understand the course of events and rightly estimate the current of historic forces which have yet to act upon the future. This martyr testimony should be closely studied. If we are to give effect to it in our own times we must possess in some degree the peculiar patience of the men by whom it was first uttered. We need to be calm, self-possessed, and deeply in earnest to convey the truth we have received in trust amidst the universal excitement. The careful and frequent perusal of the martyr memorials, and the comparison of their contents with the teachings of the New Testament, will in itself be a profitable exercise, and may induce the habit of thoughtful reflection. It would have been easy to modernize the diction of these Christian confessors, and to prepare a flowing narrative in the semi-romantic style that enchants the reader and awakens thrilling emotions; but our object has not been to excite or to amuse, but to leave a life long conviction. We well know that the indolent and the superficial will make no use of these papers; but men of earnest purpose will turn them to immediate practical account. There are a few at least in every Congregational Church who can at once form themselves into a mutual instruction class on this subject. They will master the facts in their own way, and give them the widest currency by methods best suited to their immediate locality. The tracts, if desired, can be had separately. One might be circulated amongst the members of a social circle, and form the topic of an evening's conversation. In other cases it may be deemed more useful to prepare a lecture to be given in a district and

illustrated by the diagrams published by the "Working Men's Education Society." Every facility will be afforded to those who are willing to work.

If in the course of the winter this part of our history should be well wrought into the minds of the people, a similar series of papers may be prepared to be ready in the spring. This will depend on the amount of friendly co-operation. The course of the exiles in Newfoundland and in Holland is more replete with varied incident, and may on that account be regarded with greater interest. In many respects it is unbroken ground. With a little cordial encouragement we hope to bring to light a train of circumstances with which as yet our congregations are unacquainted. It would be very gratifying if we should find sufficient co-operation to bring out the hidden documents that will connect 1562 with 1662. We hardly hope for so much favour and indulgence, and yet the moral effect of the meeting at Birmingham may prove to be sufficiently powerful to lead to such an issue. The writing of the present volume was prompted incidentally by the suggestion of a friend. We had laid aside collections made in the leisure of several years, and under temporary discouragement we concluded that they could not be published. *The risk incurred now is more than in prudence would be safe without general support.* We must be cautious, therefore, but if good can be done, the fruits of our research, conducted often under circumstances of great trial and anxiety, will be most cheerfully devoted for the use of the entire Congregational Body, at home, in the colonies, and in the great Western World. "Let me know," said Dr. Vaughan, "that I have sympathising friends about me, and I grow directly to be ten times the man I was."

9, Surrey Square,

October 11, 1861.

